Chicago May

Her Story

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by

"THE QUEEN OF CROOKS"

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CHICAGO MAY

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CHICAGO MAY

(May Churchill Sharpe)

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HER STORY

BY

MAY CHURCHILL SHARPE
("Chicago May")

FOREWORD BY

HENRY JOHN NELSON

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DEDICATED TO

AUGUST VOLLMER,

CHIEF OF POLICE, BERKELEY, CALIF.,

WHO FIRST SHOWED ME A

PRACTICAL WAY TO

GO STRAIGHT

FOREWORD

This is a cold-blooded recital of fact, a plain, unvarnished statement from a client to a lawyer. It is the history of the life of a notorious woman criminal. It was dictated by her to my stenographer, and has not been polished up for public consumption. The story stands as given.

When I represented "Chicago May" the first time, I did not know her by that name and did not know who she was. She had no money and had been arrested on a false charge. She was discharged. My treatment of her at that time caused her to return to me for professional advice. In the course of a conversation, one day, Mrs. Sharpe said she would "go straight" for the rest of her life if she could make a living honestly. This autobiography is one of her attempts to go straight.

It is not for me to point a moral. That is a matter for others. She, herself, does not point a moral, though she intersperses her confessions with various comments. Although the woman appears to be hard and conscienceless, it is probable she has a soft heart below an artificial exterior. In any event, she has brains enough to know that crime does not pay, certainly not in the long run. Punishment has not broken her spirit, but time may have dulled the edge of her skill.

HENRY JOHN NELSON.

Philadelphia, Pa.
September 5, 1928.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

About fifteen years of my life have been spent behind the bars, a long while, but less than one-third of my age. Ten of these years were given to me unjustly, for something of which I was not guilty. The rest of the time I got was handed to me justly enough, according to the rules of the game. In general, I was lucky, or smart enough to escape punishment for the large majority of the crimes I committed against individuals and society. On only two occasions was I in confinement for long stretches.

If I had never been caught by the law, I would still think, as I do now, that crime does not pay. I would want to settle down, as I do now, to make an honest living. I have tasted luxury and high-living until I am sated. The first returns of crime are large, out of all proportion to the work involved. But the largeness of the hauls begets extravagance. Crooked money disappears like lightning. A beer pocketbook and a champagne appetite encourage further depredations. Having experienced all this, and having also learned from the simple life, I voluntarily take my choice in favor of the latter.

There is no denying the fact that age and suffering have had considerable influence in bringing me to this way of thinking. Prison teaches how little one can live on, and what inadequate food will support life. Cold, hunger, and filth are

not sufficient to break the spirit, in confinement. These things are also endurable under freedom.

I do not know about others, but I am convinced that prison never reformed me. My only reaction, especially under an unjust sentence, was to want to be revenged on society. Jail only delayed the time when I would want to quit. Like other business people, I did not want to get out of harness while I still thought I was fit, and while my competitor was threatening me. Crime never occurred to me as sin.

I only want to reform, now, from a business point of view.

I have never suffered from qualms of conscience. I have had no regrets—except when I was caught. I am not really sorry I was a criminal. The reason for this is, perhaps, that I never committed a crime against an individual unless he or she was trying to take advantage of me. At least I always persuaded myself to this way of thinking. If a man, for instance, tried to buy my body, it was up to me to pretend to go along, but to do my best to thwart him and to make him pay dearly. Blackmailing was only one way to accomplish this end. I realize that this is rationalization, but so is the greater portion of almost any human and thinking life.

I earned the title of "Chicago May" legitimately. It has caused me considerable annoyance to have others, not so capable, adopt my name. This is not conceit. The annoyance was sometimes substantial, because the stealing of my name led to unjust accusations against me. It also caused people to give me a family name which was not mine. I am Irish! Imagine me being accused of having a German baker for a father! To this day, a leading newspaper in New York City marks clippings it saves about me, with the lead-penciled cue, "Vechs." Imitation may be the sincerest form of flat-

tery, but I don't want any of it. Unfair competition hurts trade.

To give the devil his due, prison did do me one good turn. It gave me time to read. From the nature of my work and the relaxations it caused me to indulge in, I could not find the time, and did not have the inclination, to read when I was at liberty. I, of course, had to read the newspapers to keep up with what was going on, but that was the limit. Detective stories mostly made me tired. After one serves an apprenticeship under the best masters, one does not want to have an amateur give instruction.

Prison books did not teach me languages. I learned French and Portuguese by living where those tongues were spoken, just as an English university-graduate learns by travel after his book-courses are ended.

Travel and good society improved my education. I traveled in Europe, Africa, the two Americas, the West Indies, and all over the United States. The best hotels and "first-class," on ships, brought me into contact with the best people, crooked and otherwise. My childhood education had not been neglected, and I was always quick-witted. I lost no opportunity to acquire knowledge, but I did so in as easy and pleasant a way as I could find.

I have used dope, but it never got a hold on me. The only times I took occasion to smoke opium were when I felt daring and devilish, or inquisitive to observe the effect on myself. I always had shining examples of the effect on others. I made up my mind I would not acquire the habit of turning to dope when I was depressed or discouraged.

With liquor it was another matter. This was a social vice which did not leave permanent injury except in extreme cases. Once in a while I might get drunk, but not often.

Wine livened up conversation and sharpened wit, if not taken too copiously. Wine was often one of the tools of my trade.

I preferred to, and generally did, travel alone in my profession. Occasionally, I went with a companion, male or female. I never hunted with the pack. This may have been because I was proud of my ability and thought most other crooks were not my equal. I worked hard to make myself a master workman. Nothing could have tempted or forced me to become an inmate of a house of ill-fame, under the dominance of a madam. I was an individualist. No slavery for me! What I earned or stole was all mine, unless I chose voluntarily to give my earnings to some one else.

Although I was born and bred a Catholic, I am now a Freethinker. If I am anything and I do not believe in creeds—I am, I suppose, a Unitarian and a Universalist. I have met good and bad people in every denomination; and no religion has anything, in my opinion, over all, or any, of the rest. I am not afraid to die.

I have met the good and bad in all walks of life. I have been helped by policemen and urged to "go straight", while fine ladies have pulled their skirts to one side for fear of touching me. I am grateful for honest advice, and may have profited by it; but I despise a hypocrite. I hate a stool-pigeon, though I have been unjustly accused of being one. I never betrayed a policeman; and I wouldn't "squeal," even on an enemy, in the clutches of the law.

At various times, newspaper stories have appeared describing disconnected events in my life. Mostly, the newspapers gave correct accounts of these happenings, but often inaccuracies crept in, and sometimes the writers were tempted to paint their pictures in lurid colors. No one hitherto has ever published a complete and accurate history of

my life. I have never authorized the publication of my complete story, but now I am attempting it in my own way and vouching for its accuracy in every detail. Perhaps it will be of interest.

Although I worked in many cities and towns, in various parts of the world, my chief headquarters may be said to have been New York, London, Philadelphia, Chicago, Rio de Janeiro, and Detroit. From these places, I made forays, sometimes amounting to major operations—London to Paris, New York to Boston, and from Chicago all over the Middle West. I was a prize-graduate of the Chicago School of Crime. My post-graduate work was done in New York and London.

I acknowledge that I am a recidivist. Several times, I have resolved to go straight, because I believed it paid to do so. Each time I went back to my old ways because I could not earn enough to make a decent living. You see, I have no trade except that of a crook. Then, too, the police have got to know me, and they often do not believe I am going straight, so they arrest me on general principles, or invite me to leave town. I don't hate them for it, because that is their business. I am just stating facts. As a matter of fact, the police would not bother me much if it were not for stool-pigeons tipping them off and lying about me. With all their modern efficiency, nine-tenths of their crime-detection is due to stool-pigeons.

Good people are watching me now. Some of them, no doubt, are praying for me. I am grateful to all of them; and I am doing the best I can to win their approval; but only because I owe it to them, and because some of them have again convinced me it pays. No one has persuaded me to go straight merely because it is right.

Criminal records are more or less accurate; but they do not always give a true picture of real events, even though photographically correct. The color and perspective are often lost entirely.

Take my record, for instance, which is found on another page:

It is not complete, especially with regard to England and Brazil.

Furthermore, it is inaccurate. In Paris, I was sentenced for being an "accessory before and after robbery". In London, I was sentenced for "attempt to murder and accessory before the fact". Compare this with the dicks' memoranda, respectively, of "larceny" and "assault".

Finally, I am charged twice with being a common prostitute. The record admits the judge discharged me on one occasion, presumably because I was not guilty. On the other occasion, it is noted that I was "fined $30.00 or 30 days"; but it does not tell that I put up no defense and paid the fine because I did not want the court to get wise to the fact that I had broken probation.

CHAPTER II

MY GIRLHOOD

I was born near Dublin, Ireland, 100 years after the American Declaration of Independence, the same year that the great Centennial Exposition was held in Philadelphia, Pa. To be exact as to the date, it was on November 25, 1876. I was christened Beatrice Desmond. Although I am thus explicit, I have little fear that the public will be able to point the finger of scorn at my relatives for having such a member of the family as myself. Desmond is a common family-name in the south of Ireland and "near" may mean next door or miles away, though not more than thirty miles. So far as I know, outside of my own relatives, there is only one man in the world who knows the exact place of my birth and some of my immediate relatives. He is a British police official, and he, good soul that he is, will not tell.

The family consisted of father and mother and seven children. I was the only girl. Some of my brothers were older, and some younger, than myself. We had other relatives in the neighborhood. Most of the boys emigrated. One now lives in Boston, Mass. One died up Baffin's Bay way. One went to Australia. Both of my parents are dead. The family has long since been broken up. I have not communicated with any of them, or they with me, for about twenty-five years. They, of course, did not approve of my carryings-on, most of which they did not know anything

about. I know I was a disgrace to the family, but I cannot truthfully say I was ever sorry. I occasionally hoped they had forgotten me, as I have tried to forget them.

All of the family were devout Roman Catholics, except myself. As is usual, however, among Irish Catholics, laity and clergy, there was great liberality and tolerance. Pay strict attention to your religious duties, attend church regularly, make confession regularly, pay your money contributions when due, see that the children learn their religious lessons, and then enjoy yourself as God gives you opportunity. Sunday afternoon was always a time for enjoyment and jollification, even to the extent of getting drunk.

One thing is certain, and that is that I cannot blame my life of crime on bad conditions at home. I had a comfortable, happy, care-free life at home. The family was in very good circumstances. They owned a stock-farm. I was the pet of the family, being the only girl; and my many escapades were related by my fond relatives with approbation and glee, far and wide. I was encouraged rather than repressed.

As far back as I can remember, I rode horses, bareback and saddled, side ways and astride. I was an expert at handling refractory animals. They just seemed to love me, from the frisky young bull, just initiated into the mysteries of the nose-ring, to the rutting boar, who would not allow a man to go through the pig-yard unchallenged. Among all my companions, I was first at swimming. I remember, yet, the lovely little stream which was the scene of my exploits.

Father was the master in the house. I remember him yet, sociable, kindly, and agreeable; but as unyielding, once he had made up his mind, as the Rock of Gibraltar. He had a pretty good temper, too, but it rarely showed itself, except in asserting what he thought was a matter of principle. He

loved his neighbors and was a good neighbor to all in the vicinity, were they Catholics or Protestants; but he sorrowfully thought that the latter were bound to go to Hell.

Mother was a handsome, buxom young woman, as I remember her. She was singing all the time, attending to her household duties, and making life happy for all round her. She was an ideal housewife, and observed her marriage vow to obey her husband as the head of the house. Mother did not make so much of an impression on me as father. It was a large, well-kept house and we always had a servant girl, who was treated like one of the family.

My first school was a primary, or kindergarten, school, outside of Dublin, which was kept by Sisters. I don't remember much about this school, except that the Sisters were very kind and put up with a lot of unruliness from me. I know I got into fights, especially with the boys. The girls were all afraid of me.

I have a distinct recollection of being given some catechism to learn for punishment for pushing a boy into a mud puddle and dirtying his new suit. This was no punishment for me, because I had a good memory and made the grade in jig-time. As nearly as I can remember, I went to this school during my sixth and seventh years. Then I recited the whole catechism without a break and took my first communion, though it galled me to be dressed up, as I thought, like a frump.

I took the next step on the ladder of learning: I was packed off to a convent-school in Dublin, where I was compelled to remain and study, intermittently, for five or six years. The going wasn't easy for me or the Sisters or my family. When they could not control me, which happened frequently, I was sent home, and sent back just as often.

The Mother Superior was an Italian; and she and I couldn't exactly hit it off.

I thought it was rather silly to say "Blessed be God", after I had knocked at a door, before I would receive permission to enter. The refusal to say this always brought down punishment on my head. The more I was punished the more I wanted to do the same thing over again. One of the forms of punishment was to have to kiss the ground as a sign of penitence. When I refused to obey, I was deprived of dessert, or not allowed to go out to play, or put on bread and water, or spanked—or sent home.

I really believe I went out of my way to get punished at the convent-school for the sake of being sent home. There was where I could find the life I loved; but Father would not keep me long. He would give me a lecture, and back I would have to go to the place that I despised so much.

The only one who thoroughly understood me was the old parish priest. He told me that education was a necessary evil and urged me to get through with it as soon as possible so that I could enjoy the free life outside of school. I overheard him tell mother, one day, that the Old Testament wasn't fit for a girl to read.

Many a time I resolved to study real hard and get through with it; but the first thing I knew, I had fallen from grace for what I thought was a trivial matter, and I made the forthcoming punishment an excuse for balking. When we started algebra, I kicked over the traces entirely and was expelled for good. Most of our lessons were of a religious nature, or in the nature of womanly occupations, both of which I despised, though it was not hard for me to do my stint. When I left the convent-school I was a smart girl, wise

to the ways of the world, far more so than the good Sisters ever dreamed of.

Among other things, I was dreadfully afraid of having a baby. I hadn't been on a stock-farm for nothing. I didn't think a stork brought babies unexpectedly. This made me very careful in dealing with boys. None of them ever got intimate with me. I recall, on one occasion, the family was discussing the wayward daughter of a neighbor, and expressing their disapproval of her conduct. One of my older brothers said, "Well, she hasn't had a baby". This made a deep impression on me.

But even the farm was too confining for my activities. My parents were growing stricter with me. Things I used to do no longer seemed so good to them. Perhaps they thought they had been giving me too much rope. Anyhow, I suddenly made up my mind to go to America, where I had relatives. That seemed to me a brilliant thought, but I knew father would not consent at that time, and I had little money. I had a plan, however.

Nothing easier than to rob the money-box in father's room. I did it without compunction, the first time I ever stole anything in my life. He could afford to lose it, and I needed it. He ought to have agreed with me when I hinted about emigrating, and handed me the money with his blessing. It wasn't my fault I was born. In the Spring of 1889 I flew the coop with sixty pounds in my clothes.

CHAPTER III

THE GIRL TURNS WOMAN

I stole away from home one dark night, when most of the family were gone on a visit, some miles away. Instead of going south, the natural way, to what was then called Queenstown, I went north. I covered about twenty miles that night, walking. In the morning, I hid myself and went to sleep in a loft over a cow shed. Waking about noon, I decided that I was far enough away from home, and in the right direction, to avoid pursuit.

I therefore put on a bold front, stole some reeky dook (sooty buttermilk), walked up to the nearby house and offered to buy food. As I anticipated, the good woman gave me the food, but would not accept a farthing. But she was inquisitive. I had to exert all my ingenuity to fend her off, explaining that I had just buried my mother in Cork and was going to my only near relative, a married sister living in Belfast, who was married to the brother of a priest in that city. The name I gave her was Katharine O'Connor. As soon as I could, I broke away and started on the tramp again. I was heading for Londonderry.

It was a very enjoyable trip with the nice weather coming on and the whole earth taking a new lease of life. Every once in a while I got a lift and in about a week, the journey was over. When I crossed the Boyne, a colleen told me there had been no fish in the cursed water since King James' Irish

had been slaughtered by the Sassenachs. It was useless for me to point out the fish I could see with my own eyes, though they were not very big, I admit. She insisted they were phantoms. This was too patriotic for me!

After I got past Enniskillen, I discovered a different kind of people, not so easy-going and generous as my Papes. I had to pay my way, and blarney was not money of the realm. It was with a sigh of relief that I finally landed in a modest hotel in Derry.

The trouble here was, everybody took a rather embarrassing interest in me. They asked so many questions that I was kept busy lying and keeping my story straight. It seems, now, I had a brother working in a shipyard in Glasgow. He was doing well and had married the daughter of the minister of a small kirk near Paisley. I came from Belfast, from my widowed mother, on a visit.

The proprietor swallowed this story, wanted to keep my money, so that it would not be stolen, and told me to go to bed early that evening, so that I would not hear the coarse language of the men in the tap. I went to bed all right, because I was tired and sleepy; but I held on to my money and told a lie about its amount. When I got up to the room, I found a plant on the window sill. The plant was lifted out, the most of the money put in the bottom of the pot, and the plant carefully replaced. I even carefully dusted away some dirt which had fallen to the floor while I was hiding the money.

The next day, I took my first sea-trip. Some of the passengers were sick, but not I. Everything was new and interesting. I made friends with the captain and many of the ladies. Everybody seemed to go out of his way to make my journey pleasant. The mate even explained ship-time and

the "ding-ding" bell. In no time I knew that four bells in the dog watch was 6 o'clock in the evening.

After arriving in Glasgow, I decided to spend a few days looking around. I went window-shopping, restaurant-visiting and tavern-observing. I remember that I was quite surprised to notice the absence of kilts on the people, which was the way I had always thought the Scotch dressed. Then, too, I observed that the Scotch blew the wind into their pipe bags instead of making bellows out of them with their arms, as we Irish did. This came to my mind when I saw a stray Scot in kilts, skirling and begging. I suppose he was an ex-soldier who had fought for the English, poor chap!

The day came for me to be off to the land I had promised myself. Second cabin was my choice, having been careful with my money, and not wanting to mix with common steerage emigrants. New York was my immediate destination. I had been told it was a very large city, with plenty of opportunity for newcomers.

Mine was a slow steamer. It took ten days to cross the pond, and I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of the trip. I laid myself out to be agreeable, and succeeded fairly well. Of course, there was the usual bombardment of questions. I had to stall a bit. It was true, my mother had a brother in the States, but I was not sure whether I wanted to look him up or not. It would be fine for me to get work first, save money, and then pay uncle a visit, when I was a success. It never entered my head that I might not succeed. Was I not a big, strapping girl for my age! People said I looked like sixteen or seventeen, and here I was barely thirteen, this Year of Grace, 1889. I told all and several I was seventeen and that I was going to see an uncle in New York City.

When we got to the American metropolis, and passed the

immigration and customs officials, I found myself alone in the big city, somewhat frightened. Before this, however, I had to tell some truths, about the name and address of that honest-to-goodness uncle I had never seen, and show my money, to prove I was not liable to become a public charge. But part truth and a few carefully artless smiles enabled me to pass the examination with flying colors. Hadn't I come over second class? Didn't I have several hundred dollars, if you counted it the American way? Nobody knew that only part of it really belonged to me. Didn't I have the real name of my uncle, to say nothing of his real address?

A nice lady, with a badge on, got hold of me and started to explain the wickedness of the world in general, and bad men and worse women in particular. She insisted on seeing me to a railroad office, to purchase a ticket to my uncle's home, and look up and put me on the train. I made up my mind to lose her, which I did without much trouble.

I went to a quiet hotel, settled myself, and began to look for work. Not so good! It did not take me long to get the hang of prices and wages. The first were too high, and the second too low. Once in a while I ran into a masher or a suggestive woman, but I either bawled them out or beat it. They weren't going to take me for a greenhorn! I ate littleneck clams for the first time in New York.

By and by, the money started to run low. I had found out the price of a railroad ticket to uncle's place and how long it took to get there. I had been getting acquainted with New York for several weeks, learning rapidly. When I calculated I had twice as much money left as would take me to uncle, I blew the town, the scene of many of my future exploits.

Over I went to Jersey City! There was no tube in those

days. "All aboard for Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and the West." I was off to visit uncle. Again, I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Horseshoe Curve charmed me. It was so different from what I had ever seen before. I thought the whole journey would be as picturesque as that, and thought of stopping off and traveling only in the daytime. My rapidly-diminishing money restrained me, however. Some of the later scenery did not appeal so much to me, but then I enjoyed the sleeping and dining-car service. I eventually arrived at uncle's ranch, near Lincoln, Nebraska. I won't tell you his name, or the name of his nearest town. It is sufficient to say that he was surprised, and none too glad, to see me.

He had to write home, of course, and tell them the news. What they wrote him, I never knew. I can't, honestly, say he was unkind; but he always appeared to be displeased with me. He had a family of his own, and everybody had to work. This did not exactly suit me. I was willing to work, in reason; but I wanted to have some enjoyment too. I wanted to ride around and see the sights. Not that I didn't. Only I wanted more of it! Pretty soon I was hail-fellow-well-met with both the boys and the girls. I was wild and so were they. Some of them were too wild, but I kept up with the wildest.

One day I met handsome, dashing "Dal" Churchill. It was love at first sight.

Dal Churchill and I ran away and lived together. Why should I be a kitchen drudge? Why couldn't uncle be a little more human? I hunted up excuses and found plenty of them. I had had the measles at Uncle's place. It was 1890. I was fourteen years old, and had become a woman.

CHAPTER IV

"DAL" CHURCHILL

I knew what my lover was when I ran away with him, and I gloried in him. He was a full-grown man, seven years older than me, all of twenty-one years. And what a he-man he was! I then thought, and I still think, he was an Adonis, a model for a Greek statue, a knight, brave and generous, but kind and loyal.

Jesse James was much admired in those days, in that part of the country; but my hero was Jesse James and Robin Hood rolled into one—and then some. He fearlessly rode the countryside, and forded the rivers where fords there were none, dealing out rough justice to oppressors of the common people, and righting the wrongs of the downtrodden. What if he did occasionally levy toll on those who could afford it? Didn't he have to live; and wasn't the good he did out of all proportion to the wrong?

Dal's right name was Albert. He came of a good family and had an education above the average. Over medium height, he was well-proportioned but rangy. There was not an extra pound of flesh on his heavy frame. He was strong, muscular, and as quick as a panther. Children and women were safe in his hands. His friends could count on him to the death, and so could his enemies. An inveterate gambler, he rarely touched liquor and never indulged in dope of any sort. He was quick on the trigger and a good pistol shot.

With a rifle, he was not so good, but a fair shot at that. Add to all this that he had black eyes that fairly bored through you and wavy chestnut hair, with a complexion that was bronzed with exposure, and there is little wonder that I fell desperately in love with him.

We first met at a dance. One of the young fellows got fresh with me, which I promptly resented. He had had a few drinks. In the argument which followed, the young fellow made some disparaging remark to me, when suddenly a fist darted over my shoulder, passed my cheek, landed on the jaw of the young fellow and sent him sprawling to the floor. The fist belonged to Dal. There was no fight. Everybody present knew that justice had been done; and, beside that, nobody there could thrash the puncher. I thanked him.

The next day I rode over to the post office, and whom should I meet on horseback but my noble, dashing man of the night before. His big sombrero almost swept the ground when he spoke to me. A splendid horseman, this man! He accompanied me on my errand for the mail and returned almost all of the way home with me. Names and histories were exchanged and mutual promises given for future meetings. That night I mentioned the afternoon's meeting to the family. I was full of it. Much to my astonishment, uncle warned me against poor Churchill and told me to keep out of his way. The result was I immediately resolved to see more of this abused individual.

Pretty soon, there wasn't a day or night passed, when Dal was in the neighborhood, that we did not see each other. Once or twice, the meetings were found out. One of my cousins squawked. I was absolutely forbidden to see or talk to the man who was now my lover. I must say that he was not to blame for hiding anything from me. He told me every-

thing, and cautioned me that life with him would be full of nerve-racking experiences. It would mean burning all my bridges behind me, never to return to the quiet and contentment of family life.

I chose him against the field, knowing him to be a robber, highwayman, safe cracker, cattle rustler and general all-round crook. I did not make a mistake in the man, himself, however. No man could treat a woman better. He never got angry or cross with me. He was always kind, tender and considerate, a shield and protector. I thought he could always win out against any odds, and that I was absolutely safe in his care.

We decamped in broad daylight. He was proud of me, and I of him. There was nothing to be ashamed of. We deliberately agreed to skip out and live together, scorning family, law, church, and conventions. For days, we rode north, sleeping together in wayside inns, until we came to wilder country. On two nights we slept out in the open. At last we came to a railroad center, sold our horses, and took train for Rapid City, South Dakota.

Not far from here, I was introduced to some of the Dalton Boys' Gang, of which my man was a member, and of which I had had knowledge before I eloped with him. My first impression was that these brother members were not so much. They did not appear to take kindly to me at first. They told me afterwards that they were not sure that I could make good and hold my tongue in a pinch.

Shortly after this, the gang held a conference by themselves. I was packed off to the home of one of them in a little, quiet village in the Bad Lands. I began to see occasional Indians and soldiers. I did not like Dal to leave me alone, but his word was law. He was away for the better

part of a week, and when he came back to me, he had to stay under cover for a couple of weeks. I was glad to have him back, but it seemed that the expedition had not been a success.

As time went on, I was admitted, more and more, to the secrets of the gang. Some of their raids were successful. When they were, all the members of the fraternity were in funds and spent money lavishly. I enjoyed this part of the game exceedingly. I liked what money could do. Then, too, it was comforting to know that robbers did not get caught, even if they had failures.

The day came when I got a part to play. Wasn't I proud —and a little nervous, if the truth were known! Dal opposed me in this. He did not want me to take any risk, but I overcame his judgment. I was instructed how to go to a certain town in Nevada and get the lay of a bank. I remember yet, how careful my big fellow was to rehearse me in my part, how he cautioned me, and how he kept asking me questions to make sure that I understood how to act under every conceivable circumstance.

I departed, acted as naturally as possible, and got information as to customs, times, locations, gossip, names, habits, and idiosyncracies of people, places, and clocks. Then I repaired to the rendezvous at Reno. The gang was mightily pleased with my report and map—all except one old cock, who said he never knew any good to come of any business which women were mixed up in. I wanted to continue in the exploit by acting as outside "man", but I was unanimously ruled out. Instead of that I was packed off to Chicago, to make sure I was out of harm's way and could not spill the beans.

This peeved me, but I certainly did take my fill of sight-

seeing and learning in Chicago. I was sent to the house of a sister of one of the gang-members, and I had plenty of expense money. It was a couple of weeks before I even heard of Churchill. Suddenly the dear boy came back to me quite openly. The job had been a big success. No clues had been left behind and there was something over five thousand dollars to split up. In later years, I would not have considered this much of a haul, for a gang; but at that time money was worth much more than it is now.

Notwithstanding the success of this venture, Dal told me he thought he and I, only, should work together for a while. He said he wanted to keep his eye on me, and be close at hand to protect me in case of trouble. He was always thoughtful of me, and truly loved me, more so than many men love their wives. I was for the plan, full of enthusiasm, and anxious to prove myself.

It was at this time, that Dal showed his character. He insisted that we must get married, so that he could have the absolute right to protect me. He also said it would be for the benefit of both of us, since neither of us could be forced to testify against the other, under the law. Then, too, he was afraid he might accidentally get knocked off, and he did not want me to be at a disadvantage in fighting the world in case we had a baby.

I was perfectly willing to go along as we had been going, but I agreed to a wedding to please him. I stipulated, however, that we should pull off one stunt together, unharnessed. He laughed his hearty, boyish laugh and agreed. It tickled him for me to assume the big-woman attitude and "mother"" him.

We went to Utah, heard of a rich Mormon who did not believe in banks and robbed his home. I was the lookout.

Dal broke into the house, bound and gagged the farmer, pushed a gun up against his belly, and made him tell where the money was. It was between two mattresses. We only got about seven hundred dollars. He must have had a lot more cached some other place. A buggy was driving up the lane. I had to give the alarm.

Three months after we ran away, we were married by a magistrate in Salt Lake City. We knocked around together for another nine months, in various parts of the Middle West. Sometimes we worked alone, sometimes with the gang. When the bunch worked, I was generally sent to Chicago about the time the mine was to be fired and the excitement was to begin. I got to know my Chicago pretty well.

I had only had my man about one year, when it was decided to hold up and rob a mail and express-train, near Phoenix, Arizona. They expected to make a "killing" this time for sure. Then came the first tragedy in my life. I was in Chicago. The job was a failure, Dal had been captured and was wounded. I couldn't believe it possible! I would go to him. He needed me.

But my husband was dead before I could start. He had been lynched, they said.

CHAPTER V

THE CHICAGO SCHOOL OF CRIME

I was a widow at fifteen, alone in Chicago. If I had had a baby, or if I could have returned to my people, the chances are I would have gone straight. Such not being the case, however, I nursed my sorrow and brooded over revenge. I started to drink heavily and made myself acquainted with as many of the underworld as I could meet. It did not take long to exhaust my funds, and then I had to go to work.

It never occurred to me to look for honest employment. Did I not know the rewards of steady industry were pitiful compared with the easy, if uncertain, windfalls of crime? I had become a spendthrift, and the element of luck appealed to me. Hadn't I always been lucky in every one of my own adventures? Didn't I owe it to my dead husband to punish the system which had brought him to his untimely end? There was no rancor in my heart against individuals; but I did have a deep and abiding certainty that society, as such, was my enemy.

When you want to go wrong it is very easy to accomplish your purpose. I had had an elementary education in the school of crime. It was now time for me to enter a high school. I enrolled in the Levee. They had a large and efficient staff, men and women, all of whom took a personal interest in their scholars, and did not mind spending hours of their time, after school, in helping backward pupils. I was

quick to learn. Years afterwards, in jail, I read about Fagin, the thief-trainer, in Dickens' "Oliver Twist"; but he was a piker, compared with my teachers.

The very first lesson given by the professor in charge, the first day, was to beware of stool-pigeons. He said, what I have since learned to be truth, that criminals would have little to fear from police and detectives, in the absence of bad breaks, if there were no informers. Most of the talk about clues, deductions and such things, are bunk. Then, too, many of the criminals betray themselves by talking too much, or pulling boneheads, or leaving trails that anybody can see and understand. The percentage of failures in crime-schools is much greater than in other schools, because most of the scholars have a low mentality and lack opportunity to acquire culture. I was tipped off that poor Dal had been sent to his doom by a snitcher. Another group of enemies to fight!

I was turned over to Dora Donegan, Nora Keatings, Minnie May—who afterwards became world-famed as a shoplifter and gangster—and Mary Ann, the Gun. They seemed to think very little of my training in the elementary school, and started out by showing me how to get a pocketbook. The course consisted of one lesson, an illustration, and field work. They believed experience was the best teacher, though they were always careful to check up on results, point out errors of method, and suggest improvements on style of execution.

This was all new to me, because I had, theretofore, gone in for what I thought were bigger things. The school staff always insisted that each branch of the profession was as important as every other branch. The advantages and disadvantages of each were pointed out in detail, allowance

being made for the personal pride of the performer. It was explained that some branches required longer training, more operators and less operations than others. The hauls, however, were correspondingly bigger. The advantages of single and double operations were duly noted, and quick turn-over was cited as an advantage in cases of frequent jobs and small returns.

There were women who ran dipping-houses in Custom House Place. They were like booths, into which you took your man. If you succeeded in getting him in, the landlady soon helped you trim him. Sometimes the Johns (suckers) would go to the Harrison Street Station and put up a holler. Over would come the wagon, and the police would pull everybody in the house. They would lock you up for a few hours, turn you loose, and you would hear no more of the matter.

Up in State Street, there were a number of hotels which had "protection." They would rent their rooms for two dollars for the night. The sucker registered as "Smith and wife, of Oshkosh," or what not, went to the room and found no water in it. The girl would go out to get the water—and never return. I often, as a kid, had as many as ten Johns this way, in one night. If the guy squawked, the bouncer would say, "Get out of here! We ain't bothering about youse and your troubles with your wife."

A whole bunch of us girls would go in and buy drinks for the girls in the sporting houses, in order to raise Cain with the landladies or madams. One night in a joint, in South Clark Street, the doors opening directly on the street, I let in a bunch of the Salvation Army with their tambourines. They started singing and playing. Pretty soon some of the slave girls were down on their knees crying and praying.

All at once, the landlady and her pimp came in and saw their business going to smash. The poor Salvation Army people were kicked out into the street and their tambourines broken. We strange girls, who were the cause of the rumpus, faded away.

I remember one night I was resting, taking a vacation from my work, and decided to go out and get some girls drunk, for the sake of the devilment of the thing, and to spite a landlady and a pimp. I got together a crowd and started out. We were succeeding royally in one house, on a side street, when the procurer came in, called me a bad name, and ordered me out for interfering with business. I had prepared for this, which I knew would happen. I had stuck a poker into the fire. Out came the poker instantly. It was nice and red and dirty. Mr. P. made a dive for me, but I embroidered his face with criss-cross work, and then made tracks out of harm's way.

One of my "homes" was in a little hotel where the Congress Hotel now stands. I always lived well when I could afford it.

In short, I ran wild for a couple of years, learning more and more every day. I learned rapidly, and soon came to be looked upon as one of the brightest students in the school. It is true I spent money recklessly; but then I made a lot of it easily; and I saved some of it against a rainy day. In fact, I had to guard myself against too much borrowing by the less thrifty, for it soon got noised round that I was somewhat of a capitalist. Furthermore, I did not confine myself to Chicago, alone. I took summer courses in schools in Milwaukee, Denver, San Francisco, and elsewhere, always managing to pick up enough extra-scholastic work to pay for the tuition.

The World's Fair was a gold mine for me and my friends, during the years 1892 and 1893. The first of those years we nicked the builders, the second the visitors. And what dreadful things were done by some of the girls! It always made me sick even to think of them. The mere mention of the details of some of the "circuses" is unprintable. I think Rome at its worst had nothing on Chicago during those lurid days. I, however, went on my way, attending to my own line of work, never being even tempted to deviate from my course by the lure of that type of gold. Why should I! I was making plenty of money, having a good time, and saving quite a bit.

Among the people I met during my high-school days were Mabel Rapp and Frank Parker. Frank was the son of a well-to-do broker. Pat Sheedy I came to know, and met, afterwards, in England and Egypt. Billy Burke was a follower of Sophie Lyons, of whom, more later in this story. Then there was Mickey Gleason and his wife, Annie, one of my particular friends, who was especially unfortunate, and of whom more anon. The list is long.

I had been arrested frequently during my schooling, but had never had to go to jail, being always discharged. I had even been arrested in Denver. My reaction to San Francisco was that it was a cheap town for my line of work. That is, I thought the girls worked cheap. In later years, I visited San Francisco and found it better for my purpose, but then I was an expert.

As I have said, Chicago was my high school in crime. The course lasted from about 1890 to 1894. I owe all my success against law and order, in after years, to the grounding I got in that school. After I had graduated, I went to many parts of the world and had many experiences. I never returned

except for short intervals; and I never did much work in Chicago once I left for New York.

It is true, I was arrested on several occasions while I was getting my schooling; but I was either lucky or smart. I never was sentenced there. The proof is that Chicago did not know me officially until after I had become famous internationally.

It was only when I had gotten into a series of minor scrapes in Detroit, from 1924 to 1926, that Chicago woke up and got my record, at second hand, from Detroit. Detroit got it from New York. The metropolis of the Middle West did not have my finger prints, and did not have my photograph. They did not know Chicago May, one of their own alumnæ.

The first big crooked job I did in Chi was with Dora Donegan. It turned out to be a big one for me. I pulled a John into the Sherman House. After I got him there I did not know how to land him. Dora came to the rescue. She saw that I was too modest in handling the prey. I lacked brass. She bawled me out for not "playing square by the gentleman." She said it was not decent to not go ahead with the job, and suggested that we have a drink all round. Incidentally she winked at me, so I would not have my spirit broken, the way puppies get if their first rat is too much for them.

I went through with the job, and Dora lifted nearly a thousand dollars out of the gent's clothes, while I was putting up a barrage of laughs, shrieks, and expostulations. Dora also helped me in this enterprise by steering the gink away from the place and allowing me to escape. I got my split, and felt quite big. It was comparatively easy after it was done.

One night, in the Auditorium Hotel, I originated what I thought was a brilliant idea in handling suckers. I got considerable credit for it, anyhow. I was up to all sorts of mischief, then, and what had started in my brain as a prank, proved to be a good cover for escape. My plan was to throw a John's pants out of the window and beat it.

As long as the victim did not get too obstreperous, it was not necessary for me to try out the new stunt. This particular night I had a bear on my hands. He was hostile and insisted on his rights. We tussled round considerably, and I had got his wad. The room was in the rear, facing on a small, dark street. The chances were that nobody would notice, until the next day, anything which might be thrown out. The pants were on a chair near the window. The night was warm and the sash was up.

I managed to get near the right place, and, bless my heart, the clothes fell out. I was sorry, of course! While the John was peering out the window and cursing his luck, I got the door open and flew down the stairs, unmolested. I suppose he got his trousers all right, and gave some plausible reason for them being in the street.

But the next case was a little more complicated. I had robbed several people of money in a well-known hotel. On this occasion I had tackled a tartar. He was a man of considerable influence, and he insisted upon "justice." I knew I was in for an investigation, but I felt quite certain the dicks couldn't hang anything on me.

I had a little room, the windows of which looked into Wells Street. I have forgotten the exact address. The room had been used to dope a John, who was left there until he came to and went away peacably. It was some weeks before I dared go back to it after that. It was a hide-out joint for

me. The harness bull must have seen me make tracks there for cover.

Anyhow, sure enough, along came a police-lieutenant. He was handsome and good-natured and not very hostile. As a matter of fact, in those days, cops had very little sympathy for a sucker who let a woman pull the wool over his eyes. Of course, they had to obey instructions and get busy if too much of an alarm was raised.

This chap was not long in the room before I was feeding him drink. All the same, he was bound he was going to make a pinch. He told me, however, that he would see that I got an even break if I treated him right.

I promised to be good, but I had an awful time getting him to shed his harness. He did it only bit by bit. It was a very hot day. When he was ready for bed, I grabbed his uniform and threw everything out of the window. He was so stunned, he could not even speak. I rushed out of the room before he could collect his senses, and left town for a few months. One of my chums sent me my clothes from my regular room.

I heard, afterwards, the poor lieutenant had an awful time explaining to his captain how his uniform, belt, baton, and badge got into Wells Street. It turned out that a youngster came along, accidentally, found the outfit, and was carting it away, when a stray cop nabbed him and took him and the find to the station house. It was feared, at first, that the lieutenant had been foully murdered or kidnaped.

The first time I was actually in court in Chicago was long afterwards, in 1924. I was not there as a criminal. I had gone there to get two shoplifters out of trouble. I was their character witness. It struck me so comically, that I nearly died laughing, what between the district attorney being so sorry for me on account of the trouble my friends had got-

ten into, and Chief Collins letting me see my friends in jail at midnight—and none of them knowing me.

The pinch had been made by a store-dick in Carson, Pirie & Scott's establishment. I got a lawyer the next day and arranged for bail for the man. The woman had to take her medicine. I put up at the Fort Dearborn Hotel. The lawyer noticed my beautiful sable coat, which he asked me to leave for security. I was fool enough to do it, thinking I would get it back in a few days because everything was fixed for a fine; or, at worst, sixty days. The case was to come up in the West Side Court. But the man got cold feet, and beat it, so I lost my valuable coat.

I was in the same burg in 1926. The last man I lived with regularly had made me promise to undergo an operation. I was very sick with kidney trouble. He and I had pooled our money; and he drew out $1,000.00 for my expenses. I checked into the Congress Hotel, bought some nice dresses, and bummed round the night clubs and resorts until all the money was gone. I was so out of spirits I did not have spunk enough to go through with the operation as I had promised to do.

So back I came to my man. We had a row. I did not want to live with him any longer. He gave me $500.00 more, out of the common fund. The chances were that I had more in that pool than he had, though I must say he was a thrifty contractor and did work, himself.

Once, in Chicago, I met a bartender who worked in Roger's saloon at May and Madison Streets. It was an awfully tough joint. One night, I happened into the Social saloon, in State Street, where I ran across my bartender, all dressed up in his Sunday best. We had become friendly, before this, because he always took my part when I had fights

with Johns in Roger's place. This had happened frequently because I generally took my suckers there to lose them.

"Say, kid," says he, "I've got the darb (stolen money)."

Enough said! We went out to Matt Hogan's saloon, after having had a few drinks at our meeting-place. Some more followed at Matt's joint, and then we had some eats. He spent money like a sport. We became confidential. His story was that he had robbed his employer's safe while the boss was away on a drunk.

"The old man can think what he likes when he comes back," the braggart said. "I give him a week's notice ten days ago, and I haven't been seen near the place since my time was up."

Then we started to drink more, each one sparring for position. Finally, he screwed up enough courage to ask me where I lived. I stalled by telling him it wasn't safe for him to go with me to my joint, because the police wagon was a frequent visitor to that neighborhood. He suggested another place. I objected because it was near Mike Monahan's saloon. I had had several fights there and was afraid of being beaten up. After great persuasion, however, I agreed "reluctantly," so we went there, taking plenty of red-eye with us—but not until he had shown me a roll.

He was going to take me to Salt Lake City in the morning. "I hear pickings are good there," said the wise Alec, "and we can coin money." He used the expression that two can live as cheap as one, which was the first time I ever heard that much-quoted lie. "Ho, Ho," thought I, "that's what you want from me—after we spend the loot." Hooked up with me, he wouldn't need to work.

The room gave on the Polk Street Depot. My guy got very sleepy. I relieved him of about six hundred bucks. You

might have thought it was a million, the way the sucker was beefing about making his getaway. Wasn't he the bold, bad man?

I didn't even leave town, but simply moved my quarters over to the South Side. He never squawked, though he talked a great deal to his intimates about knocking my block off. It turned out that the liar didn't steal the money at all. He had saved the money, out of his earnings and tips, and decided to invest it in a partnership with me, where it was to bring enough interest to keep him on Easy Street for the rest of my life. He wanted me to think he was a swell thief, traveling on his own. I have met plenty like that since then.

In the very same room where I robbed the bartender, George the Gambler was carried in some years before, after Irish Molly had killed him. She shot him as he was getting off a train with another little country girl. Molly owned the house.

She had been a simple little child, who worked as a waitress in McCoy's Hotel, in Van Buren Street. It was an old-time hostelry, where the western cattlemen used to put up. George seduced and betrayed the girl. Then he put her on the game (had her taught thieving). She was a success and soon became a madam. Carrie Watson and Old Molly Monroe were friends of hers. The latter told her to watch George. Sure enough, she caught him bringing another young girl into the life, just as he had done with Molly.

As I have said, the skunk was hopped off. The killer was tried and acquitted. The Irish were very strong in Chi, in those days. All classes rallied to Molly's aid, because she had been good and kind to the poor, in her prosperity. Afterwards, I am told, she went into a convent to do penance

for her sins. Some one wrote a book, in Chicago, entitled "The Life of Irish Molly."

The glamour of the murder hung over the room where George the Gambler was carried to. It was haunted. Didn't George's ghost used to walk in that room at certain hours of the night, wearing a large hat—for which he was noted during life—a brown overcoat and a Vandyke beard? That was the Gambler to the T. No matter how crowded Dora's house was with girls and Johns, this particular room was always empty.

Business went on the blink after the World's Fair, so the next year, 1894, I came to New York. I had become acquainted with some of the workers from that city; and I was anxious to try new fields, and see the place where I first landed as a greenhorn, five years before. I was thoroughly trained, as far as I had gone; but I had not reached the top of the ladder, which was hardly to be expected, since I was barely eighteen years old. Anyhow, I had no ties to bind me, so I went, traveling first class, as I could well afford to do. My gang was sorry to lose me and wished me good luck in my studies.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW YORK COLLEGE OF CRIME

For the next three years, I attended classes regularly in the New York College of Crime. It did not take me long to catch on to the ways of the new place, and to get acquainted with the new teachers. My reputation had preceded me. I came as an "honor man" from the lower school.

The first thing I did was to compare the methods of the two institutions. They were not very different. I thought I observed, however, that the details of execution were worked out more carefully in the Levee.

The New York police, on the other hand, seemed to be more efficient in roping you into jail. Stool-pigeons seemed to be more numerous, and their punishment, by the friends of the ones they squealed on, did not seem to follow so quickly and surely as in the mid-western city. The police in the East also appeared to have their graft organized better.

On the whole, I was glad I had made the change, principally because of the novelty of the new environment. I bragged about the superiority of Chicago crooks and tried my best to prove it. But there was one branch of the profession they taught me in New York, which was entirely new to me, and little practiced in the West. That was blackmail. Such differences as there were in the badger, panel, and creep games, I easily reconciled; and I occasionally originated variations. The money stakes were bigger.

Owing to the activity of both the police and myself, it became necessary to make more frequent business trips to adjacent cities than had been the case in Chicago. I found it necessary, consequently, to work and get acquainted in Boston, Newark, Cleveland, Portland, Providence, New Haven, Washington and Philadelphia. I got acquainted with better classes of society.

By way of illustration, I made a big touch in New York, one night, and found it convenient to go to the races at Alexandria, near Washington. I remember it well, because I wore diamond earrings for the first time, bet on Leonardo, and lost six hundred dollars in the ladies' wash room. Two hours after, I returned to the wash room, in fear and trembling, and found the package of money where I had dropped it.

I was developing into a big, handsome woman, wise to the ways of the world, and as smart as the best. I had to make good in order to dress as I did. My pride would not let me do otherwise. But there were certain failures to make the grade on my part. For the first time, I got mugged and a place in the rogues' gallery, and all for a trivial offense against a man who tried to get the better of me.

I had been working New York a couple of years before they mugged me. Altogether I don't think I was arrested more than nine or ten times, but I only got one real conviction, because the Johns would not appear against me. They feared to do so for their own precious reputations' sake. This is another reason why criminals escape so often in certain lines of work.

New York was full of creep joints at that time. For the benefit of the uninitiated I shall explain the meaning of this and other criminal jargon later on in my autobiography.

The notorious Julia Barrington had a place at 6th Avenue and 51st Street. Later, Big Julia and myself had a trade-war in London. Schush Thomas, afterwards killed, and his wife, Irene, had a joint in 36th Street West. The bulls gave many of them protection. Considine ran his famous saloon in 6th Avenue, and afterwards opened the Metropole.

All the wire tappers operated round the 6th Avenue place, and it was a hang-out for all sorts of crooks, adventurers, and men-about-town. There was a saloon downstairs and a pool-room upstairs, with the fake wires for the suckers looking for a sure thing. The "Postal K," the Gondorf Brothers, Bob Nelson, Black Mike, Jack Black, and a host of others worked their different forms of swindling round Considine's. Of course, there were others, perfectly legit, who were there occasionally. Jim Corbett and his brother Tom, Connie McVeagh and his brother, Jim's trainer and many other good sports and gentlemen.

If I had remained put, I would not have suffered as I did in the years to come. I would steal large sums from men who would refuse to make complaint against me, or to appear against me after they had complained, on account of the publicity. The work was easy and the profits large. Some of the victims were even generous enough to admire me for my skill and brass. I had always a certain refinement until driven into a corner. Then I was rough and coarse. I caught them all: University professors, ministers, priests, gamblers, country yokels, sports, "gentlefolk," and visiting grandees from foreign parts.

I met good people too, whom I never tried to nick, on both sides of the Atlantic, people whose conversation was a pleasure and an education to listen to. Often these people did not know who I was, but I held up my end well enough, enjoying

the sparkle of wit. Thus I met Henry Dixey, DeWolf Hopper and Mark Twain, and others. The people who introduced me thought it was a great joke to palm me off as a respectable woman of means.

I got acquainted with the newspaper boys and made myself popular and a good-fellow with them. In fact, one of them, Harry Mott, which is not exactly his name, became my sweetheart. He cost me a lot of money, but he was a good soul, and not altogether to blame for what he did. Charlie Becker, the one who was afterwards excuted for his connection with the Rosenthal case, was a friend.

I remember being very badly scared shortly after I had settled down in New York. A young girl was murdered soon after she had left the Haymarket, a despicable resort at 6th Avenue and 30th Street, under the nose of the police station. She lived in 24th Street near 7th Avenue, next door to me. She was found strangled with her jewels gone. Her alias was Diamond Flossie. I knew her very well, and I knew no John had killed her, because she did not take suckers to her home. She always took them to Annie Pond's place. I was not allowed to enter there, because I had a bad reputation for rough-housing when things did not suit me.

Flossie's lover, named Murphy, got away with a good alibi, I was afraid I might be dragged into the mess, and I could not afford to have my business hurt by an investigation, though I and my friends were innocent. Nobody went to the wires (chair) for this infamous crime. I went to the morgue to see her. Her beautiful white neck was black and blue where she had been choked. Her people were politicians in a city up the Hudson River. As they refused to own her, we girls of the old tenderloin raised enough money to give her a swell funeral. For months, we were all on the qui vive

for a Jack the Strangler. It was as bad a scare as that of Jack the Ripper in London, only the wretch, whoever he was, did not operate so often.

Another time, I was nearly done in for my big sparks. One night in the Coleman Restaurant, 27th Street and Broadway, I dropped in all alone to kid the Australian lightweight, Griffo. While I was waiting, two smart Alecs came over to my table. I had a drink in front of me. One of the guys, with a shifty eye, said he was a doctor and had a private carriage outside. This was before the days of automobiles. I was invited to take a drive, and consented. Pretending to look away, I saw the guy drop some dope into my glass. I grabbed the water bottle and hit him on the head. He had to be carried to his carriage. That was that!

Only a couple of months after this, the same trick was completely carried out on Diamond, or Trenton, Lottie, a beautiful, red-headed girl like myself. She was taken from a saloon at 27th Street and 6th Avenue. Lottie was a dope-fiend. When they gave her the chloral, it only made her partly unconscious. The fake-doctor wanted to give her another dose to finish her off, but the other guy insisted that she have a chance for her life, since they had relieved her of all her beautiful diamonds. Lottie survived, but she was so grateful for her life that she would not appear against the pair, and afterwards went to live with her savior. The last time I saw her, she was in the penitentiary, and still handsome.

One time, in New York, there were a couple of boys in my apartment. We had been drinking and got into a fight. I accused them of stealing a diamond pin. They denied it, and said I had robbed them. All of us were pinched, on account of the racket we made, and had to appear at the Jefferson

Market Court. My friend Harry, the newspaper man, was there and told me to shut up. I was so boisterous, knowing I was innocent, that finally Judge Hennessey told me to keep quiet.

"I won't shut up," I sassed back at the judge.

"You won't, eh?" shouted the old Irish politician. "Put down a charge of violation of the excise law," he added. "Selling liquor without a license." This was because, it had been testified, I had sold the boys two bottles of beer.

When I was held under five-hundred-dollar bail on this phoney charge, Harry went out to get a bondsman. I had met him first at Clark's joint, where I had pulled an umbrella away, under which he and another reporter had been hiding themselves to get a story. I lived with him, after that occurrence, down to the time I married Sharpe. In the meanwhile another newspaperman got the bail fixed up.

Poor Harry couldn't get next to a bondsman and was returning dejectedly to our flat in West 28th Street, when I whistled to him. He was delighted and said bars and bolts couldn't imprison my red head. I thought of that many a time when I was in prison in England.

About a month after this, I was down in Park Row, after I had closed my creep-joint for the night. I usually went there, when business had been good. I would meet Harry, we would get breakfast, and we would then go home together. On this particular morning, we were in Hudnut's drug store, when I spied old Judge Hennessey sitting in the rear, drunk.

I also spied his diamond. My Harry and Harry Barstow, an actor's press-agent, and some of the other boys, were there. They got wise to what I was going to do, and urged me to lay off; but I insisted and told them to clear out and

they wouldn't be mixed up. I ordered "Condut's Fluid" from the clerk, which had him guessing, because it was an English preparation. While he was busy, I got the judge's diamond. The pawnbroker gave me a hundred and fifty berries for it, so I got back at the old Irish dog.

The time had come for me to graduate from this place of criminal learning. I had been mugged and I had established a police record. I was a well-known character all over Manhattan and elsewhere. I had attempted my first big blackmailing job, and was waiting for the money, which was subsequently paid, as will be set forth. Notwithstanding the bigness of the city, it was getting too hot for me.

I had to take a vacation, and I had a hankering to recross the ocean. Money did not hinder me; but nothing would do but that somebody should pay for the trip, and pay well. Luck was with me, once more! I was introduced to an Englishman who was a planter in Jamaica. We sailed together for England. I had graduated from college and was now to take a university course.

CHAPTER VII

LONDON UNIVERSITY

Reggie Reynolds made a capital ship-companion. He began by being sorry for me and ended by being sorry for himself. The very first day in London I met Kid Wilson, one of the gang from around Considine's place in New York. He was in England with his wife, Grace, working the pennyweight, *i.e.*, sizing up gems for weight, color, etc., with a view to stealing them, after substitution of fakes. Reggie and I stayed at the Metropole. I introduced him to the Kid, whose first name was Eddie, and he steered the poor fellow to a joint in Bennett Street, St. James, where gamblers held forth and milked suckers by wit and wile.

Mr. Reynolds was soon trimmed of most of his fortune. He had two maiden aunts in Kent, whom he thought would leave him their property. When they heard of his philandering with a woman, and mixing in with card-sharks, they disowned him. To make matters worse, a Jew, in Kingston, Jamaica, did him out of his share in a hotel in which they were partners. The last time I saw him was when he was working as a flunky in one of the fine hotels in London. My current gentleman-friend handed Reggie his hat and coat. Later, the gentleman slipped the flunky a half-Jimmie (half-sovereign), and he never batted an eye, though I could see he knew me.

I had attended recitations in the Chicago school, and lec-

tures in the New York college. Now I had to do research work. I was finishing my education. The first year in London was not very profitable. The older scholars and the faculty gave me the routine work to do, such as apparatus set-up, tabulation, and statistics. They took most of the glory and the profit of the experiments, if they were successful. Otherwise, I got considerable blame. This made no difference to me. I was ambitious, and was there to make myself letter-perfect. I had to acquire the imagination necessary for the higher and scientific parts of my chosen profession.

Beside that, I had saved money, and took good care to make enough to pay for my trip. I lived in more than usually good style. I made several trips, back and forth, to New York, to look after my American investments, especially with regard to a blackmailing suit, for breach of promise to marry, which I had instituted. I sometimes stayed only a day or two before making a return-trip.

I had now become a full-fledged member of an international gang; but I seldom worked with them, except to help out where they thought my peculiar qualifications fitted into some of their plans. I found I could work better and faster by myself, or with the aid of one or two assistants. I also found the danger of being tripped-up was less.

It was during this period that I improved myself by taking the part of a Salvation Lassie in Edna May's "Belle of New York" chorus. It used to make me laugh when I drew my wages and compared them with what I made on the side. However, the stage life was a relaxation for me, and enabled me to catch Johns more easily, so I took that into consideration.

The Spanish-American War came and went. Sometimes I was operating on one side of the Atlantic, and sometimes on

the other. On one of my longer trips, I ran into young Sharpe in New York City. I did not gyp him. He knew what I was; and I knew what he was. We were married. This was the second, and last, man I married. Both of them were Americans. That is how I was able, subsequently, to claim American citizenship.

It has been said that the second husband committed suicide when he found out about my character. That is a lie! He was last heard of while serving as an officer in Uncle Sam's army in the Philippines. He was reported "missing." As a matter of fact, I left him several times, disgusted with him. I shall have more to say about him in this autobiography, when the proper time comes. I must say, however, his family always treated me with the utmost consideration.

Along came the Boer War. Then came the Paris Exposition! Also came my bit in French prisons for my part in the American-Express Branch robbery in Paris. Loyalty to a comrade got me into that mess. The sentence was right, however, according to the rules of the game. I got time off for good behavior and through financial pull. The heads of all police departments, especially that of Scotland Yard, are very difficult to bribe with money; but the long-green helps with the underlings and they, in turn, use all sorts of pull, affection, hate, and other influences to warp the judgment of their superiors.

This prison experience having been concluded, I took the time from my own immediate work to help raise money for Eddie Guerin's escape from Devil's Island, or rather from the mainland, near there. There has been much said and written about this break which is not true. I am going to tell the truth about it, as I know it, and in my own way. The trouble was that Eddie would not hide in the United States,

as I advised him to do, but had to come back to England. He was recognized and was locked up for a year because the English refused to grant the French the right to extradite him.

Unfortunately, Eddie's jealousy, or his hardships, caused him to get the insane idea into his head that I had betrayed him to the London dicks. I had become tired of Eddie, and I had told him so during a drinking bout. Then I lived with a couple of other men. Anyhow, I slipped away to South America to avoid trouble. While I was on that tour, I read about Eddie's pinch and how he had accused me of betraying him. I was entirely innocent. I would not betray even an enemy-crook to the police, though I really think I might kill him if my temper got the better of my judgment.

The trip to Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and other Latin-American cities was full of pleasure, adventure, and work. It brought me much money; but I spent most of it. I had only one pinch which brought me to jail, and then only for a few days. I was sick, however, and in a hospital, for some time. I captivated a member of the British aristocracy and was very fond of him. He committed suicide; but I swear to God I was not responsible for that, as I shall explain in detail further on. At the Pan-American Conference in Rio in 1906 I cut a wide swathe at a ball, owing to the fact that my dear aristocrat was my companion. We took precedence over some very high officials and their ladies, much to the very evident disgust of some of the ladies.

After Eddie Guerin got out of the extradition mess, he pursued me, looking for vengeance. He got it, but not the way he contemplated. He wanted to carve up my face, so as to disfigure me for life. I was saved by Charlie Smith, who shot Eddie. The result was that Charlie served fifteen years

and I served ten. My sentence was given me for what I had done in trimming English aristocrats. I had nothing against Guerin, and Charlie only acted in self-defense. Guerin's lies and those of one of my former maids, together with circumstantial evidence, put a crimp into our defense. Of this, I shall tell more.

From 1907 to 1917, I was in a woman's jail at Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire, a place noted for the eating-quality of its ducks. The sentence included hard labor; but not ducks. When the English say hard, they mean it. My experiences in that place would fill a book by themselves. On the advice of my lawyer, Arthur Newton, I did not make a peep of a complaint, for a reason which will be related later. I met very fine people during that time, visitors and prisoners, Irish patriots, English ditto, German spies, aristocratic degenerates, dope fiends and imbeciles. I shall have to give you a close-up of some of them.

Although I have been married twice and have lived with other men who were not my husbands, I have never had any children, for which I suppose I ought to be thankful. If the results of my experiences are of any good to anybody, they are welcome to them. I am absolutely convinced that most people commit crime because of economic necessity. This sounds like socialism; but I am not a Socialist. I mean that most criminals are such because they think they can get what they think are necessities more easily by crime than by honest work.

While the honest man, backed up by all the forces of society, has small chance against the crook, the crook loses in the long run. He acquires irregular habits, makes money spasmodically, becomes a spendthrift, is nervous and temperamental, is subject to many temptations, acquires the

dope habit, and doesn't know a peaceful life. He is a hunted animal. His parasites are legion. Few can retire, in old age, with a competence.

In my own case, animal spirits, and romantic, chivalrous love, carried me through the entry-way of crime. If I, as a first offender—that is, when I was first caught—had been taken in hand, and had had the advantages of honesty pointed out to me, away from my crook friends, the chances are I would have settled down. That is, always provided that I had had honest work to do, at honest wages, with honest time for relaxation and pleasure.

Environment, or circumstances outside the individual, picturesque or otherwise, have much more influence in the making of the criminal than heredity, natural depravity, disease, or deficiency, in my opinion.

CHAPTER VIII

EXPLOITS IN MANHATTAN

Let me tell you some of my experiences in New York, aside from those already mentioned and those to be given in more detail.

When I first came to New York, I checked in at the old St. Denis Hotel. I lived there several weeks, sizing up the situation, but concluded it was not a good place from which to operate. So I moved into the old tenderloin and got a room at 6th Avenue and 29th Street. I got by for quite a while without any arrests.

Several wise guys round the Hoffman House tried to tissue me, that is, take a big bill and pretend to put it into my stocking, but substitute a neatly folded piece of tissue paper instead. But that did not work with me.

One night I picked up a very pompous Englishman in the Hoffman House. He was in New York for some sporting affair in Madison Square Garden. He followed me around into 23d Street, and I took him to a creep-joint in 27th Street, off 6th Avenue. He was touched for eighty pounds in English notes. It turned out he was a very well-known sporting character by the name of Moore. He came back for his money, but the bunch booed him.

They had it on him, for he was a degenerate. In the old days, such practices as he was guilty of were looked upon as terrible crimes. These babies did not dare to go to law. When

a guy is like that, I'll say that for the cops, he is generally kicked out. In the old days, almost all Johns, including the natural ones, were treated with scant courtesy by the minions of the law.

Another sporting man I beat out of a lot of money was a man who was reputed to be Charlie Mitchell's backer. He was in America for the fight in New Orleans. I picked him up in the lobby of the Fifth Avenue Hotel and took him to a room in West 39th Street, in one of the infamous Moffett's Flats. I did him out of several hundred pounds. He was taken down and around so many streets that I do not believe he knew where he was. Anyhow, he never made any trouble.

Some time before this, a friend of mine, English Alice, robbed a well-known Englishman who was visiting in New York. As Alice was coming from this New York joint, a Central-Office dick tapped the Englishman on the shoulder and said, "Look into your pockets. You are with a panel worker."

The Englishman turned round and told the detective to mind his own business. Later on, however, he had occasion to go into his pockets for money, and, sure enough, he found his big roll had disappeared. He had Alice arrested and she was given the third degree, like a man, to make her squeal on her men accomplices; but she never squawked. She was bailed out by a sporting man named Tracy. He let her go to England, and she did not show up when the case was called in court. He had to make good, which broke him.

On another occasion, I picked up a John in Broadway and took him to the Coleman House. I nicked him for a few hundred dollars and a handful of silver, which I took along for tips. As there were a couple of silver dollars, I gave one

to the elevator boy, and one to the night porter. I thought they seemed sort of light when I was handling them; but I was in a hurry and not bothering. I hopped into a cab, went home and laid low for a couple of nights. When I thought the coast was clear, I made bold to pass the Coleman House. Out jumped a detective with the silver pieces in his hand. He grabbed me and confronted me with the night porter. It turned out the tip I gave him was a trick dollar, which opened with a spring and contained the photograph of the John's wife. No wonder the porter was mad. I laughed in his face, it was so funny. The detective and I talked it over. The sucker only wanted his wife's picture back. I wouldn't own up I had taken any money. When a cop wants to talk, he has no case. This was my first "arrest."

Not to be too chronological, I remember the occasion when I was first mugged. I had been working New York for a couple of years. I was walking down 14th Street, on a snowy day, shortly before Christmas. I had been shopping in Macy's store. A young fellow in a beautiful sleigh drove past, smiling. He stopped, and asked me if I would like to take a ride; and I, of course, said, "Yes."

I was asked what I did for a living and said I worked in Macy's and that I lived in 45th Street. He took me home, and said, when we parted, "I can't go now, but I will call and get you to take you for a ride to-night." I suggested that I should get a girl-friend; but he said no, he wanted to ride alone with me.

At the appointed time, my bold hodger came. We drove up through Harlem, and away out into the country, into the wilds. We stopped at a road-house where the only illumination was candlelight. Before that we had stopped at several wayside inns, taking a couple of drinks at each place. After

more liquor at the last place, the picker-up suggested that we go up to a room and have some "night-caps" sent up to us. We went up.

He was pretty drunk. I soon got his money, which only amounted to about a hundred dollars. He missed it, started a ruction, and both of us were kicked out into the snow. I had the money concealed on me, and told him I would give it to him, if he would take me back to the city. This was when he tried to choke me. He said he was the nephew of a judge sitting in Jefferson Market Police Court. His first name was Jake.

On our way back, in the sleigh, the young man would get boisterous and try to take the money from me by force. I belted him and screamed. The people in passing sleighs would take notice, stop, be reassured, and go on, telling me that they would report a "lady in distress" to the first cop they met. All these men said, "Don't be afraid," which I wasn't, if I could only get half a chance to make my getaway. The other sleighs were full, so I could not get a lift from any of them. I wasn't injured in the sleigh.

It was early in the morning when we got to the livery stable in 43d Street. When we got out into the snow, the gent tried to attack me, but I gave him one on the nose. A tussle followed, and both of us went down. He tried to get me inside the stable to choke me, but I broke away and went home and to bed, dead tired. A few hours later, having had a good sleep, I went out to do some Christmas shopping.

There was Detective-Sergeant Reardon and his partner across the street. This was a swell neighborhood and a high-class house I lived in. Among others, Marie Dressler, the actress, Edgar Gibbs Murphy, the wing shot, and his girl,

and a pal of Charlie Delmonico called the place home. Delmonico used to visit his chum frequently. It was because the place was so high-toned that the dicks waited outside for me. They did not want to stir up antagonism by making a pinch in the house.

I was taken to police headquarters, was one of the first measured by the Bertillon system, and was mugged (photographed). I was brought up for a hearing, either on Christmas day or the day before that. Justice Keough was on the bench and I had no lawyer. I defended myself and told the whole story. Jakie said I had hypnotized him and handed him one with my south paw.

The judge said to the prosecutor, "If you saw this girl take your money, why didn't you stop her?"

The only reply of the dub was that a funny feeling came over him as he had already tried to explain.

"Judge, your honor," said I, "this man told me that he, himself, and Chief McClintock, of police headquarters, were in the habit of taking young girls out and using them. He also said he would take me to Jefferson Market Court and have his uncle, who is a judge there, send me up. I did nothing to him; but I wouldn't let him use me; and he got mad, and started to fight with me. I only wanted a sleigh ride."

Judge Keough got mad and bawled out the young man. He told him he ought to be ashamed of himself to bring a young girl before him, at Christmas time, after having got drunk, tried to abuse her, and threatened to use his pull with his uncle to have her committed to the workhouse. He wound up by telling Jakie to get out. He said to me, "You are discharged."

But my photograph was now in the Rogues' Gallery for

the first time. That was an expensive Christmas present for me!

After I got some money from a blackmailing job and had saved some extra money, I decided to go on another trip to London. Things had become pretty hot for me in New York, and I had had several arrests and discharges.

Before I went, I tried to rob a man who was then an investigator for the New York World. He was supposed to be in love with me. He also had a large roll of money, and I wanted it. In order to get it, I consented to smoke the pipe in a joint in 28th Street. I tipped off a girl, known then as Klondike Flo. She was a confirmed dope-fiend.

I told her what I was going to do, and that I would split with her if she would entertain him for a few hours after I left. I had already procured a first-class ticket for my trip abroad; but I did not intend to leave immediately. What does this woman do, but wise up my sucker, with the result that he gave me the haughty call-down and I didn't get the money. I was so mad I sailed that day.

Once I met a young actor, who visited where I was then boarding, in 45th Street. He knew my racket and said to me one day that he knew a Jew who had several thousand dollars' worth of sample jewelry. The man was stopping at the Morton House, in 14th Street. I got busy, became acquainted with the salesman, went with him to his room, had a few drinks with him, and gave him some knockout drops. The dose must have been too strong, because he did not revive until late the next day.

I took the package of jewelry, which contained several large-stone rings. When the Jew came to, he hunted up the actor who had introduced us, and the actor got cold feet. I had shown the stuff to Charlie Becker, the detective who

was afterwards electrocuted. He wanted one of the rings, and I agreed to give it to him if there was no pinch.

Next day, there was a general alarm out for me; and Becker lost no time in getting me and putting me safely away in a room in 53d Street. We hardly got out of my place before the actor and the Jew were there. The thespian had been fool enough to tell him where I was living.

After staying in the temporary room for a day, I was taken to the apartment of Pauline Washbourne, in 46th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues. She was married to a dip, but was crazy about Becker. She had a private opium lay-out. As I did not smoke, Becker, a newspaper man, and myself used to drink her champagne.

The search got so hot that I went to New Haven, waiting for the storm to blow over. While I was there, I had some fun with the Yale students, and did a little work, to pay my expenses.

I got me a lawyer who was also a fixer. The jewelry had been pawned by Edna Bowers, a girl-friend. We arranged to have the pawnbroker give back the jewelry, after giving him principal and interest.

When we got the jewelry, I went to Jefferson Market Police Court, and gave myself up. The Jew got his jewelry, the lawyer was fixed, and the cops were fixed. The Jew said I was not the girl that robbed him, so I was not held, and I walked out.

Everybody was satisfied except me. The game wasn't worth the candle. It cost me money, and I lost a lot of time.

I well remember April 27, 1897. That was the day Grant's Tomb, on Riverside Drive, was dedicated. President McKinley made a speech, and a lot of military and naval officers were in New York to aid in the ceremonies. I said to an

old Irish cop, in 23d Street, whom I called the banshee, "Mike, please point out the high officers."

"Go along with you, or I'll fan ye with me club," says he to me, smiling-like. "Shure and it's high officers, ye'd be wanting now!"

I went into Broadway Garden, between 31st and 32d Streets. There were four officers, in blue and gold, sitting at a table. As they had only three girls, they called me over to make up the party. After several rounds of drinks, they suggested that we go. The girls took them to a hotel, next door, run by Irish Paddy. He was not there, but his wife let me pass. I was barred from all of the hotels and most of the night resorts. All of us went up into one big room and more drinks were ordered. We kept moving from one seat to another, and I had gone through the pockets of the four men. Three of them did not have much; but my baby had three hundred dollars on him.

After I got the money, I made believe I was sick and had to go to the ladies' room. I went out and planted the dough on the stairs, under the carpet of one of the risers, at the first landing, just off the street. Not to look guilty, I returned, and we drank and danced.

Then the girls got asking the officers for money. I piped up and said, "Oh, girls, why can't you be patriotic! You surely don't want these fine American officers to pay after they have shown us such a good time."

The boys who had little money said, "That girl's a sport. She has the right spirit." What does the one do who called himself Captain Cunningham, but fish into his pocket to pay the girls and go on with the party!

Believe me, there was a racket! Where was the boodle? Everybody was talking at once and protesting about some-

thing. The girls were mean enough to tell who I was. Irish Paddy was home by this time and wanted to throw me out —and I was perfectly willing to be thrown out. But the naval officers called the police.

I was the only one who was arrested! It was nearly morning, and I got some cheap lawyer round the court. I sent for a friend. He got a girl and went to Paddy's hotel. At step four from the bottom, he stooped to tie his shoe lace, and sure enough he found the wad of bills just as I had told him he would find it. When my case came up, the naval officer was not there, and I was discharged.

William Sill was covering the Jefferson Market Court at the time. He had interviewed the captain, when he was having lunch with his fiancée at the Waldorf-Astoria. She was a New York society belle. The captain pooh-poohed the whole thing and said he knew all about the case, but did not want to betray a brother officer. You bet, he did and didn't! Anyhow, the story got into the papers.

Under big headlines, there was a picture of a naval officer bowing low before a girl, with this caption: "They All Salaam to the Old Flim Flam that Never Dies."

Billy was a great newspaper man, who helped the weak against the strong. If the captain could have hidden his identity, I would have been sent to the can for a long stretch.

Another affair I had concerned a Chicago man who wanted to hit the high spots in New York; and I was willing to help him. This John's name was St. John, though I have my doubts as to whether or not he was ever canonized. Another girl was with me. I took my laddybuck to a joint in 28th Street.

It was not long before I had his money, which was mostly

in gold. There was a saloon under the room, and I went out to get a bottle of whiskey, leaving my hat and coat to prove good faith. I slipped the money to the trailer (helper) and returned. I always believe in seeing the game through. The other girl started to ask for money and I kept telling her to shut up. But no use! The sucker got tired of being pestered, reached into his pocket, and found his money had been blown.

It was near daylight when they brought us into the 30th Street Station House. The Jane was crying and protesting that she had always been warned I would get her into trouble if she went out with me. We came up before Magistrate Mott, who had the reputation of being a tough customer to deal with. The guy was there, said he was from Chi, and admitted he was drunk. He said the other girl was in his company most of the time.

"Which of the girls robbed you?" said the judge.

"I don't know," answered Saint John.

"Get out of here," said the judge, "and go back to quiet Chicago."

One night I went into the Lambs' Club, on a bet, because it was against the rules of the club to admit ladies. The actor-members present thought it was a good joke, and so admired my nerve that they prevailed on the others not to throw me out. We had a few drinks and a sociable talk. Then they sent me home in a cab, at their expense. As I had several places to go before I hit the hay, I suppose the cabby turned in a big bill. The newspapers, the next day, said it was twenty-four dollars and sixty cents, or something like that.

While I was in New York, I was accused of acting as a stool-pigeon for the Reverend Dr. Parkhurst, the re-

former, in his vice crusade. This is absolutely not so. What happened was this:

Two boys came to my flat, one night, and stole a diamond pin out of my sweetheart's cravat which was in our bureau drawer. I reported the theft to the West 37th Street Police Station. Allen Hayes and Curry were put on to the case. They found a bookmaker in Jersey City who bought the pin; and then they had come to my rooms to tell me about it.

Early the same night, I had met two old Johns, as I thought, at Clark's place in 6th Avenue near 31st Street. They told me to go on home and get three more girls, and they would come up with two more men, and we would have a party. They said they were from up-state and wanted to meet some live wires. I ordered a case of beer at the grocery store for them.

Sure enough, they came and began drinking beer at a dollar a bottle (before prohibition!), and paid each of the girls ten dollars for her time. I stole twenty dollars more from my companion, which was all he had. While the party was going on, the men started to undress.

A knock came at the door, and one of the men let Wardman Hayes in. I talked to him in the hall, but did not give him a cent. He did not know who the men were and I did not tell them who he was. Finally, the men left.

Later, I was surprised to learn that Moffett, the owner of the apartment house, had been indicted by the Grand Jury. My visitors turned out to be Parkhurst agents. They swore they got the evidence in my rooms. The landlord, even, did not blame me. If I had trapped a dick, I would not have got so many discharges subsequently.

The first touch I made in New York, after my ten year

bit in England, was that of an old man in the park, near Madison Avenue. He started to paw me. I felt the old guy's poke (pocketbook). Surely, I had not lost my nerve and cunning! I dug down and got his money while he was trying to kiss me. I just took it on the run, scared to death, and got into the first cab that came along. When I opened the leather there was only thirty dollars in it. I had become a recidivist.

The next job came easier. It was that of a hotel proprietor, with a beautiful home in Harlem. He told me to say to his housekeeper that I was his niece, just come over from Ireland. When we went into the house the worthy lady saluted him with a punch on the nose.

She said to me: "Madam, you look different from what he usually brings in. I know you are not to blame."

He hit her and I went to the poor woman's assistance. In pulling him away from her, I yanked his poke from his back pocket. On my way out, I picked up two gold watches which were lying on a table. The lady told me to send in the police, which I did not. In the leather was one hundred and fifty dollars and one of the watches was no good. From then on I worked at the old rackets and felt that my nerve was still good.

While one of my men was doing ninety days, I rented a joint in 65th Street, right near the police station. I ran it with a kid and gave him a percentage. One night we trimmed a big politician. He didn't say a word—at the time. All he did was to go away and squawk to the cops! Just as I was bringing in another sucker a detective stopped us. They had already fanned the kid; but they could get nothing out of him. His story was that the gentleman had given him a dollar to find me and bring me down town to him. The

dicks let the kid go, chased the John, and told me to get the hell out of their district.

I furnished a creep joint, on one occasion, at the back door of the 100th Street Police Station, and had a man who was supposed to help. The room was arranged so that the head of the bed was under a window which gave on the kitchen. The clothestree was stationed there also. There was no other place for the John's clothes except a chair, which I used. At that, the chair was within reach of the window. Even if the sucker was cautious enough to hang his clothes on the bed post, he lost out. I had the place open, no closed doors.

There was a large theatrical trunk in the kitchen, which could be hooked from the inside. The helper stayed in the trunk until it was time to operate. The kitchen window fastened from the kitchen side. This helper was so yellow that he would never take all of a John's roll. I could not make out how come I was steering so many cheap-skates until the particular night I am about to tell of.

I had met a man in Churchill's in Broadway. He said to me, "Say, kid, I hope you are O. K., because I've a lot of money on me." He told me he was from the West. "What do you call a lot of money?" said I to him.

"Forty-five hundred dollars," he replied. I always could gain the confidence of most Johns.

He gave me fifty bucks, and asked me to look after him. I took him to the joint, and had to go after my helper, who was drinking in the nearest saloon. I could have done the nicking myself, but wanted the assistant to take some of the chance. Would you believe it, he only risked taking five hundred dollars!

I would never have known the truth, but what that was

all there was in the sucker's jeans, except for the sucker himself. I would have thought he was simply a four-flusher. The John asked me to have a farewell drink; but I refused, because I wanted to get rid of him. He pulled out his wallet, and, bless me, if it wasn't full of greenbacks! Then he pulls out fifty dollars and hands it to me saying, "Here, kid, this is for being honest." I nearly passed out, but I took it and thanked him.

When I faced the yellow dog with the facts, he confessed that he had been doing that all along. He said he was playing safe to keep me from the pen. "To protect yourself, you mutt," I said, and we had a red-hot scrap.

A few months later, I took a politician in tow, by myself. We went to a place down town. I got five hundred out of him. He never kicked, and never went to the police. I felt better, because, in this case, I did not have to split.

One night, months after I robbed this last politician, a Rumanian Jew was forcing his attentions on me. I was working alone, then, in the street. The kid I have spoken of happened to be walking with me, chatting. He punched the Rumanian in the nose when he persisted in butting in. The Jew went to the police, and said we had beaten and robbed him. The dicks paid no attention to him, but merely said, "If you see them again, let us know." I heard no more about the matter at the time.

I still had the creep joint in 99th Street, and had a date with a swell Spaniard. That same night, as luck would have it, I was arrested. I had bought a quart of whiskey. One of my friends and I were having a drink, when I heard footsteps.

"My God," said I, "here come the cops!" My friend grabbed his glass, to remove the evidence, and got into the

trunk I have spoken about. He didn't have time to get out of the rooms.

In walked Detectives Fitzgerald and Finn, the latter a fresh young guy. Fitzgerald shook hands with me, and said "I am sorry, May. I thought you had stopped all this!" I asked him what he meant. He told Finn to bring in the rapper (squealer).

In comes the Rumanian who says I had him in a room in 128th Street (my straight room) and robbed him out of fifty dollars, and then beat him, nine months before. The only explanation I could give for the arrest was that the politician I had robbed, who could not afford to appear against me, got the dirty liar to press his charge. The Jew was an East-Side tailor. I never took a penny from him. He was bothering me and the kid simply punched him.

I started to laugh, thinking of the guy in the trunk, in the kitchen. The wise-cracking Finn started to pull the bed to pieces. I remarked to Fitzgerald, "What the heck does he think he is going to find in the bed after nine months. When the John said he was robbed, I didn't have this place."

They turned up the light in the kitchen. There was nothing there but a few glasses. My private place was then in 53d Street. They stalled round a bit, looking out the side window in the kitchen. Smarty Finn was leaning against the trunk.

Finally I said, "Well, boys, let's go." I walked ahead, because everybody in the street knew Fitz. Unnecessary publicity is foolishness for a crook.

I was taken to the Harlem police station, and Edwin England, with whom the Rumanian lodged the complaint in the first place, took charge of the case. I was brought up twice in the Harlem court, and then committed to the Tombs,

with which I was now acquainted. The trial came on before the General Sessions, in one-two-three order.

Sullivan, my lawyer, put me on the witness-stand in my own defence. The district attorney was letting me down easy; and two of the judges appeared to want to deal fairly with me. The presiding judge, however, insisted on giving me the indefinite sentence in the penitentiary on Blackwell's (now Welfare) Island.

The point about the whole matter was, however, that I was innocent. I was guilty in many other cases, I admit.

Once, in Newark, I went into a Greek restaurant for breakfast. There was no one there but the boss. He got talking to me and asked me if I would go over to New York with him to have a good time. When I said "Yes," he asked me if I would have a drink. Again I said "Yes."

We went upstairs to a room over the restaurant. While he was in the bathroom washing out a couple of glasses, I opened a bureau drawer, and saw a fifty dollar bill. I stuck it into my stocking. In another drawer I found an envelope full of money which I stuck into my dress.

We had a few drinks. Then the Greek got mad because I would not immediately do what he wanted. He demanded pay for the drinks and the breakfast. This was my excuse for a quick getaway. I ran down the stairs, calling him a cheap skate. He came after me, knocked me out, and took the envelope, but not the fifty. When I came to he was pouring liquor down my throat, scared to death. I got away with a few scratches.

It was about this time I turned down an offer from an Italian to join forces with him. He was a dangerous character, and is now serving a long sentence. He wanted me to peddle dope, but I did not like that line of work. The nego-

tiations took a couple of trips between Boston and New York. It might have been a good deal at that. I was to join the dope ring, and was to go to Montreal and learn the smuggling end first.

One of the disappointments of my life was when my lover, Charlie Smith, the man who shot Guerin, was watched so carefully by the dicks, when he came back to America, in 1922, that I could not meet him safely. I was over in Newark at the time, waiting to see him, but I fooled the smart-alec police by going to Philadelphia, just as if I didn't want to see him. Since then, however, we have been in frequent correspondence, and know each other's plans. He is now writing for a magazine under another name.

On one occasion, when I tried to help a thief who had just got out of prison, I got into a peck of trouble through no fault of my own. It was a bitter, cold winter night. I had been in New York for some years, and had not yet started making business trips to London. Parading up Broadway, I was accosted by a wan-faced youngster named Charley Rodgers.

"Hello, May," said he.

When I turned to look for the owner of the voice, I saw the poor, miserable boy, shivering, without an overcoat and hungry. As I did not want to stand talking in Broadway, because I was chilled to the bone, under my furs, and because cops loved to interrupt such tête-à-têtes by ladies of my sort, I steered Charley into a Chinese joint in 28th Street. After I had shot a few fast drinks into him, and he had gorged himself on hot *chow mein,* he opened up and told me his tale of woe.

Well, it wound up by me giving the bloke the price of a room and a few bucks. Now it happened, there was a young

private detective who had a room across the street from where Charley got his room. I called him "Old" Sleuth, because he once served some papers for me in a blackmailing breach-of-promise-to-marry suit I had on hand. The young lad had a folding-bed in his room, which was sleeping quarters at night and office in the day time. His name was Smith. I never knew his first name. He did many errands for me, and I was one of his few good clients.

Well, I told Rodgers to tell him, in the morning, to come see me at my hotel, the Coleman House, the same day. I had some business for him to do for me, shadowing a John who was not bridle-broke. It was late. I might have delivered my own message, only I did not want to wake up Old Sleuth, who was probably asleep by that time. What does my bold Rodgers do, but go over there that same night, find my detect in the toilet, deliver the message, and take his new winter overcoat.

When I saw the poor chap the next day, he looked very dejected, and blurted out, before I could say anything, "Somebody came to my room last night and stole my overcoat." I tumbled right away, but did not let on.

I expressed my sympathy and said, "Never mind, kid, I'll find out who the prowler was, and get it back for you." There were great big tears of gratitude in the youngster's eyes.

As soon as I got rid of him, I strolled over to 27th Street where I had staked Mr. Rodgers to a room. He was all smiles and told me, without asking, how he had lifted the overcoat of the copper. I was mad, hopped on him, told him he had a nerve to steal from my friends, after the way I had befriended him, and ordered him to return the cover (overcoat). He did it, but it took some argument. Finally,

he agreed on condition that I would wise him up as to where to get a good, warm overcoat.

I thought of where I used to live. My sweetheart still lived there. Although I spent a lot of my time there, I had no keys for the place. Over I went to Harry's (my sweetheart's) room, stole his keys and gave them to Charley Rodgers to have pass keys made. What does that fool do, but go to the very locksmith who made the keys for my sweetheart's landlady. The private dick was grateful for the return of his overcoat, believe me!

But that isn't all. At this swell boarding-house, where Harry lived, there were some very high-class Jews. One was named Jack Myers, and he had a beautiful overcoat. I told Rodgers to take it. They hung their top-coats on the hall hat-rack, when they came in for meals, rarely ever taking them to their rooms, even when they went up for the night. They knew each other well. But instead of taking Myers' coat, my bum took the coat of a poor young journalist named O'Reilly.

There was a terrible racket about the miserable little theft. The locksmith recognized his mark, on the keys he got for samples from Rodgers, and reported to the landlady. Suspicion pointed at me.

Fortunately the landlady, herself, had a past in the sporting world, so she knew better than to have the law on anybody. All the other boarders gave poor O'Reilly the merry Ha, Ha! What I said to Rodgers was aplenty.

"Surely," said that boob, "you are not going to make me give up this benny, too!"

Harry told his friend Becker the detective, and Becker suspected Rodgers. The matter of O'Reilly's overcoat became a standing joke. My sweetheart was furious because

the theft reflected on his character. I had to make good somehow.

I looked round for a sucker to fill the bill. Sure enough, he came my way. After I got him in the back room of a saloon, I relieved him of a couple of hundred bucks. They were fifty dollar bills. I rushed off to Tommy Lane's place, just off 30th Street, in Broadway. It was a newspapermen's hang-out. A lot of the boys were there. Poor O'Reilly was hunched up in the back of the room near the stove. It was snowing outside. I went over to him. He knew me, of course.

"How about a drink?" I asked him.

"Things are breaking bad with me," he replied, "or I would buy."

"The drinks are on me," said I.

We had some hot Scotch, and they knew how to make it there. First the glasses were thoroughly heated in scalding-hot water. Then the lump sugar was dissolved in ditto. A shot of real Scotch whiskey was carefully floated on top. This was set on fire. While burning, the lemon peel was given a twist, to discharge some of its oil into the flame, and dropped into the mixture. Some drink on a raw night! O'Reilly regaled me with the latest news about the stolen overcoat. I can see him yet, just as he looked then, so worn and worried.

Then I took O'Reilly out, through the drifting snow, to O'Rorke's for supper, told him I took his coat for a guy just out of prison and urged, by way of extenuation, that I had intended to take the rich Jew's cover. I did not dare tell him it was Rodgers who turned the trick. I handed him a fifty dollar bill. A man could get a pretty good overcoat for that price in those days. He refused, until I assured him I could not get his benny back. What does the honest chap do,

but tell me his coat only cost forty dollars, and insist on spending the remaining ten.

I told him, we ought to get out of the neighborhood, for I had just lifted (stolen) the money. Down we went to Sam Nelson's place in Eighth Avenue and made a night of it. I remember, in the early morning, going to eat in a tough joint in 40th Street, the only place open. Then we had more drinks.

By that time the stores opened, so I steered Mr. O'Reilly into Sanford and Cavanaugh's place in 23d Street. The poor old scout was so drunk he could hardly stand while the guy was taping him. He asked for a forty-five dollar Raglan. I tipped the salesman the wink, and gave him sixty dollars for the one selected. Some money, back in the late nineties! The firm were expensive tailors.

Shortly after this, I left for Europe, and, I think, I never again saw any of the bunch of newspaper men I had met that night. They were a kind, big-hearted crew, always ready to stick up for us girls; and we appreciated it.

To the best of my knowledge, I never knowingly harmed a newspaper man. I always had a warm spot in my heart for them, poor, reckless, happy-go-lucky spendthrifts. Considering the quality of their work, and the nervous strain they were under, at times, they were the worst-paid and most generous people as a class, I ever had the pleasure of meeting. They knew all about everything but their own affairs.

CHAPTER IX

"JIM" SHARPE

The second and last time I got married, there was little love involved; but there was a certain amount of gratitude. Harry was still my sweetheart, but he was away, on a Chicago paper, at the time. I had helped to rob a Lutheran minister in New York. For this I was pinched, and saw the inside of the Tombs for the first time. They thought I was a first offender, not knowing my record. While I was languishing, and casting about for means of escape, James Montgomery Sharpe, the son of a well-to-do-family went to the District Attorney. He told the D. A., he would marry me and take me out of the life I was leading, if I was released.

I had known young Sharpe as a man-about-town, a regular-fellow, dashing and handsome. He appeared to be a square-shooter, and I never molested him. He was always decent and liberal with me, when we had parties; but that is as far as it went. I was released all right, so I had to carry out my part of the bargain. I had visions of escaping from the life I was leading.

We were about twenty-three years old, each, and were married in the Church of the Transfiguration (The Little Church Around the Corner) in May, I think, of 1899. Neither of us could reform right away, so we agreed to spend our honeymoon by batting round New York for a

week and then sobering up. There was considerable newspaper publicity.

Sharpe was in the steel-plate business, in the city, with his brothers. The family lived in Belleville, N. J. The mother was a fine old lady, and had something to say in the closed corporation which the boys ran. Jim was the black-sheep of the family and was afterwards kicked out.

He did not have any too much spending-money allowed him. He got twenty-five dollars a week, with odd amounts thrown in when he could cajole the family into loosening up. We could spend the twenty-five in one evening, if we did not splurge too much. Board and clothing cost us nothing. We were received into the family as if nothing serious had happened. I suppose they decided to make the best of a bad bargain. The horse and carriage were ours for the using.

But Jim was a bad egg, and I wasn't the one to reform him. Once he needed some money and could not pry it loose. He forged his mother's name to a check on the Bowery Bank. It was only his mother's pleading which saved him from prosecution and jail.

I did my best to go straight, out of gratitude to Jim and the family, but I had expensive tastes, and they could not be gratified unless I went to work at the only work I knew. I never had a desire to steal for the mere sake of stealing. At that, however, I hung on to my good resolutions and suppressed my desires for the gay life. But I discovered Jim in what, I thought, were some rotten, low acts and plans. The result was that I left him several times, and would come back only when he promised to straighten out and become a man, for his sake and mine.

One day, after we had returned from a drive on the Speedway, Jim started to complain to me about his brother George.

He blamed George for being thrown out of Sharpe & Sons, and being put on an allowance of twenty-five dollars a week.

He said he had told me in good faith, when he married me, that his mother had provided for him in her will; and that he could make enough, until her death, to support me liberally. He then told me he had spent, on me, all the money his father had left him. I found out, afterwards, that this was not so much and was the only money Jim ever had.

He then asked me how much chloral it would take to kill a person, and said it might be a good way to do for his brother. I thought, at first, he was joking. But, no! A few days later, my husband, to whom I had only been married a few months, showed me some of the crystals. He had a cousin, working in Hudnut's Drug Store, in Lower New York. One day, he went back to the prescription department to get a drink, and the cousin being busy elsewhere, Jim stole the chloral.

We had a row. I told him he was crazy. How could he poison George without poisoning the whole family? Then I begged of him to consider me, under all the circumstances. Didn't I have a police record! I would have been guilty, unjustly or not. We argued the matter almost all night.

I was so disgusted that I beat it to New York for a week, to see my friends, and went on a drunk. My friends might have been crooks, thieves, and what not, but they did not prepare murders in cold blood. When I got back home, I never was so glad in all my life, as I was to see George alive and well. I had nothing against him.

Jim's plan was to put the dope into his brother's coffee. The Irish cook, Annie, was very fond of the black-sheep, because he used to slip her a drink every once in a while.

Old Mrs. Sharpe would not allow any liquor on the place. Jim told me Annie caught him fiddling round the kitchen and chased him out. He did not have a chance to doctor his brother's coffee. I was so relieved that I nearly cried, and threatened to squeal if anything like that happened again. I had not really believed it would go that far.

It was coming close to Christmas and we had no money for presents, though we expected to get some extra spending-money for that purpose. My husband said to me one day, "May, let's go over to Philly, and see what presents we can get from Bailey, Banks & Biddle. They are customers of ours and will not send in their bills for three months."

He said it was dangerous to go to Lynch or Tiffany, in New York, because they might call up the factory. So we went to Philadelphia, put up at the Bingham Hotel, and Jim introduced himself as a junior member of the Sharpe concern. One of the Bailey men, who knew Jim, was given as a reference. He came forward and made identification.

As I had been cautioned not to go too steep, for fear of suspicion, I limited myself to eighteen hundred dollars' worth of purchases. Instead of taking the goods with us, we left them, to be sent to the home address, care of my mother-in-law, via express. As Jim did a lot of business for his mother, there was no question but what the man at the railroad station would give him the package.

But we reckoned without Brother George. When he heard we had left the night before, he said to some of the family, "I bet those devils have gone to get credit from some of our customers." He 'phoned round at once and, sure enough, Bailey, Banks & Biddle spilled the beans. I had no Christmas presents. There was a family row.

I laughed, because I was thinking of getting out. Jim was

furious. He said no more about killing anybody, but he kept muttering to himself. One night he came in very late, with wet feet, all covered with mud. I asked him if he had walked home through the meadows. He said, "No, I have been waiting all night in the River Road for George to come along." "Why," said I, "you would kill Mike, too."

Mike was a Polack, employed on the farm, who used to drive the boys to and from Belleville Station. My husband replied that one Polack, more or less, would not matter. George had missed the last boat at the Cortlandt Street Ferry, that night, and had put up in New York. There might have been murder.

The next day was very cold and dismal. Jim and I were sitting in the library before an open fire. Hanging on the wall was a painting of one of the Sharpe's grand-uncles, a very fine man, dressed in Colonial style. My better-half told me the history of the picture. The old codger was killed by a barrel of plaster of Paris falling on him. That wasn't very interesting to me.

It seemed, however, that this gentleman had said, just before the accident, that he hoped God would strike him dead, if something wasn't so. The English, generally, are in the habit of making this appeal to the Almighty. I do not believe in preaching, but I took this relative's fate as a text, and preached a sermon to my husband. I don't know whether it did any good or not.

Anyhow, my husband promised me solemnly, that night, before we went to bed, that he would not try to kill his brother. Having accomplished this much good, if good it was, I left for good.

My sister-in-law wrote me afterwards that Jim got a lieutenant's commission in the American Army. He was reported

"missing" at roll call, one morning, after the troops had been in action against the Filipino insurrectos.

I forgot to mention another of Jim's dirty tricks, for money. The two hired men, Mike and John, slept over the stable. They were thrifty, had been working for years on the place, and kept their money round their waists. They were too dumb to bank it.

Jim got a rope and fastened it so that he could lift the hasp on the inside of their door, by pulling from the outside. One morning, about two o'clock, my amateur-thief tried to sneak in to the men's room. One of the Polacks was wakened, jumped up, grabbed an iron bar, hit Jim, and knocked him out. The racket roused me and the whole house. George loosed the dogs. They hadn't even barked, because there were no strangers about.

You may wonder why I tell you all this. I do it without rancor. Aside from the gratitude in my heart, I had the desire to lead a good, if comfortable, life, among refined people. I do not say Jim fooled me deliberately; but he did fool me just the same. He had no prospects, owing to his wild ways, and I had been led to believe that he had. When I married him, it was my idea that both of us would reform.

Then, too, there was the constant dread that the one I had promised to honor and obey would get me into a scrape by his fool actions. I was in the difficult position of having a past, and I knew that I would be seriously handicapped, in case suspicion once pointed my way. I was well rid of him.

If I had been different, perhaps I could have made a change in the man. I tried and failed. He never tried. When I left, I think the family was sincerely sorry to see me go.

They hoped, possibly, that I could accomplish what they were not able to do—save the black-sheep.

I am sure the dear old mother felt that I would do right if I was given half a chance. Probably she knew me better than any of them, and appreciated me for what I wanted to be. She is dead now, God rest her soul, and my husband is still "missing," probably dead. I hope he did not suffer when he died, if he did die; but I hope he does not come back to me if he is alive. He did not commit suicide, on account of me, as some newspapers have said.

CHAPTER X

TYPICAL BLACKMAIL

My first big case of blackmail occurred in New York, in 1897. Professor X., of Columbia University, got running round with me. He gave me the opening. Tony M—, a member of the Four Hundred, was the dub who put his reputation into my hands, if, indeed, he had any rep to lose. The professor was so sensitive about his standing in the community, that he and I used to go away together, for trips, on the night-line to Albany. In New York, he contented himself by making the rounds with me. We traveled in good society, and he used to laugh up his sleeve, because respectable men did not know the character of the woman he was introducing them to.

One night, the professor introduced me to "Tony," in a fashionable restaurant. I thought, at first, that butter would not melt in that man's mouth. He was so proper. If he had treated me the way the actors did, and let it go at being a good fellow, I would have laid off of him.

But, no! From the very first he wanted to go to a room with me, and buy me like a common street-walker. I stood him off for a while, but finally I yielded. I took him to a creep-joint in West 27th Street, run by me and a young girl-friend of mine. We had a trailer, whom we paid one dollar a job. The foxy John had only a few dollars on him, we found out.

The game was worthy of our best skill. We put the trailer wise, so he shadowed the aristocrat to his home in 5th Avenue, for future business purposes. The prey had my address, and I had his, but he did not know that I knew his. The next day, after our first session, he wrote me, making an appointment to go to dinner with him. I met him a few times after this, never robbing him. He carried no money with him. I had other plans to suit his case. He thought I was a cheap find.

The next I heard of my fine gentleman, he was fishing and hunting in the Canadian woods. He started to write me letters with obscene drawings of men and women in them. They got worse and worse. The drawing was fairly good, but the subject matter was revolting. I did not know what half of the pictures were supposed to represent, they were so rotten. And I had thought I knew a thing or two about things myself.

I showed the letters to my newspaper sweetheart, Harry. He used to laugh at my escapades, but they were often harmless, and never unnatural. Now, he was quite indignant, and said, "This is vile. That degenerate ought to be made to pay dear for sending such stuff through the mail." This helped to convince me that I should bleed the sucker.

When Tony came back to New York, he called me up; I asked him for money right off the bat. He hedged, cheap-skate that he was, so I was more determined than ever that he would have to pay me a tidy sum for my time and trouble. I made an appointment to meet him in a public place, I think it was in Bryant Square.

I renewed my demand for money. He asked me if I had destroyed his letters. (Every one of them contained the injunction "Burn up as soon as read.") I told him, "No"; that

I had shown them to a newspaper friend, I thought they were so good. I thought he would nearly collapse. He gave me fifty bucks, and told me to go right home and destroy the evidence, saying they were only meant for me, and were drawn as a joke.

I heard no more of him for a week. Then I wrote him for more money. After waiting a while, he sent me what I asked for. Then I began to write him regularly, always asking for money. My requests were thinly-veiled orders. Sometimes he did as he was told. Sometimes he didn't.

One night I met him in a saloon in 23d Street. I walked right up to him, as bold as you please, and said, "Mr. M—, do you want your dirty letters back?" He turned pale. When he was able to pull himself together, he mumbled, "Yes," and started to explain that he had always been decent and generous with me, and that I ought to be the same with him. I cut him off promptly, so, he asked me what I thought would be a fair price. I said fifteen thousand dollars. He nearly fainted, and said he could not afford it.

I said, "All right. I will sell them to the newspapers, to the highest bidder." Then I bawled him out for a dirty, degenerate cheap-skate. I clinched my tirade by telling him he had broken the laws of both the United States and Canada, by sending his filth through the mails, not forgetting to ask him what his family would think of him. He weakened, and promised to raise ten thousand dollars for the purchase of the letters.

Then the details for settlement were arranged. His brother and a very well-known Brooklyn lawyer were to call at my apartment in a few days, at a time to be mutually agreed upon. They were to bring the cash with them; and I was to hand them all the letters.

When the time came, my reporter and a detective friend were planted in the back, in my kitchen.

It turned out that these two had looked over my letters, and extracted a few of them. They thought Tony wouldn't miss them, and I would have some proof, in case he had me arrested for blackmail.

Of course, the lawyer had to see that some of the filthiest were missing, and told me so. I was nonplussed, and accused him of stealing them himself. He laughed, and said, "When you find all of the letters, we shall do business," and out he walked. The boys came from the kitchen, laughing.

It was no joke for me. Ten grand had slipped out of my clutch. The lawyer had showed the swag to me, in the handbag he carried. I could not re-open negotiations, directly, for various reasons, so I went to a lawyer at 114 Nassau Street. He told me to start suit for breach of promise to marry, which I did.

Things, then, began to get too hot for me in New York. The Four Hundred had some pull, and I began to feel its effect. Along came the English-Jamaican planter, so I took my first trip to Europe. Outside of his affair, my first year in the world's metropolis was not so good. My running expenses were too heavy for my income. Back I came to New York.

When I went to my lawyer, to see if Tony's case had been settled, he told me it was still on the calendar. I thought the matter over, decided the job would have to come to a close, took a gunman with me to the lawyer, asked him to let me see the letters, put them into my bag and walked out.

The next day, I 'phoned Tony to find out if he was still in the market. He said, "Yes, if you can produce all of the letters, but only five thousand dollars for you." Then I sent

a memorandum of all the dates. An appointment was made for me, with his Brooklyn lawyer, in his office, near Brooklyn Bridge. I kept the appointment, delivered the goods, and got the cash. When I opened my poke, to stow the long green, the lawyer noticed that I had a gun in it.

He laughed, never turned a hair, and said, "You, and that iron, don't go out of this office till you sign this release." I liked him, for that! Then we had a little chat. He looked over the drawings. I asked him what he thought of a member of the Four Hundred who would send pictures like that to a woman.

He grinned, and said, "If all the fools in this world were dead, we lawyers would starve to death." I liked him still more, and told him I might be a live fool and have to come to see him, professionally. "Don't," said he. "My fees are very high. I make more money out of the other kind of fools."

During the Paris Exposition of 1900, I was palling with Mamie Brooks in London. The trouble with Mamie was that she didn't know a good John from a bad one. However, she got hold of a British trooper who was dressed up like a gentleman. I took him into camp. After I got him where I wanted him, I went through his jeans. The poor beggar had only ten bob (shillings), so he went free, as far as money went.

I did take some letters, though, on which I noticed a nobleman's coat of arms. When I rid myself of this cheap John, I took the letters to one of my lawyers, George Burton. He was rather prominent, and was afterwards convicted of fraud. We shook the member of the nobility down for several thousand pounds. This same lawyer put me on to the camera racket, in connection with the badger game.

I, once, blackmailed a man for one thousand dollars. He paid me, on my assurance that that would be all. I kept my word. He found out, afterwards, that I had been hard up, and had refused to tackle him again, though urged to do so, by my friends, who knew the circumstances. This so impressed the gentleman that he later hunted me up, without any solicitation on my part, or that of my friends, and voluntarily provided me with money and a lawyer when I was up against it.

These are rather typical blackmailing experiences. There is not much profit, compared with the risk, in this game, if lawyers represent both sides. The victim pays just as much, if not more; and the bird of prey gets many of his feathers plucked. It is much more satisfactory if each side deals directly with the other.

The trouble is that neither side, as a rule, trusts the other, and that is where the lawyer comes in. If he is honest, he will only represent the victim, though he charges a mouthful. If he is crooked, he will represent the blackmailer. But, then, he will cheat his client.

CHAPTER XI

MY SUICIDES

During the course of my career as a crook I have been charged, in the newspapers, with attempting to commit suicide. The story was a fake. It was perpetrated by a jealous lover. It was not press-agent stuff. Since this is a truthful life-history, I must tell, however, of a real attempt at suicide, which never got into the papers.

I had been batting round New York for some years, and had been abroad a couple of times, when I became friendly with Nick Tonetti, which is not exactly his real name. His father was a wealthy chocolate manufacturer. There was nothing wrong between us, personally. He was just a good fellow, brimming over with money and liberality. He liked to have a good time, and enjoyed our parties, when we were resting between work.

Nick had a fashionable hang-out at 22d Street and 5th Avenue. He was very good to me, and took me to all the swell night-resorts, in, and about, New York. He also took me to a fashionable tailor's in Fifth Avenue, and bought me what I needed. I was some looker, and it tickled him to be seen with me. It gave him class among the boys. At that time, I traveled round with a Chicago woman, named Net Manning. She was much older than me, and a wonderfully good thief.

One night, Net and I were in Featherstone's saloon, in

29th Street, off Broadway. It was a resort much frequented by the gang. I don't know why this was so, because the guy who ran the place was an ex-bull, from Virginia. "Once a bull, always a bull," is a crook saying.

This particular night, there was quite a gathering of the clan. Nick was there, too.

We were all drinking wine, and I changed my place from beside Nick to one beside another man. Net Manning went over, and sat down on Nick's knee. After a while, Net got up, said she was going, and wanted me to go along with her. But I did not want to go, and stubbornly repulsed her importunities. She left in a huff. I again sat down beside Nick. A short time later, Nick missed a valuable stone from his scarf.

Immediately, there was a racket. Nick said I had taken the diamond. I swore I knew nothing about it, which was the truth. Then the proprietor interfered and raised Cain. I was not believed. The only one to take my part was a man, McNally. There was a lot of talk, and we had more drinks.

I had two hundred dollars in large bills, in my stocking. I pulled them out, peeled off a fifty to pay for the champagne and tip, and stuffed money and change into my rain-coat pocket. Would you believe it! The Dutch woman in the crowd, Minnie May, robbed me of the remainder of my two hundred. The cat was old enough to be my mother. When I was sick in Detroit, very recently, she visited me in the hospital, toothless and old.

When I arrived home, I was drunk and depressed. I did not mind the loss of the money so much as to be accused, wrongly, of snitching the diamond. Nick was too good to me for me to even think of robbing him. He was a

legit, but he did like to show off that he was such a rounder.

I drank some stuff in the bathroom, which was kept there for the purpose of killing roaches. It sickened me—that was all! They got a doctor, who pumped out my stomach. I speedily recovered, and started working again as if nothing had happened.

My friend, Net Manning, sold the big diamond to one of the pay-off boys (confidence men), for three hundred and fifty dollars. I got my half, although I did not deserve it. I had been a fool to stay on at the party.

I tried to see Nick to square things, but he would have nothing to do with me. I couldn't squawk on Net, and I had mine out of the loot. I would have gladly returned the gem if I could, and paid for it out of my own pocket. Nick made the crack, one night, in a saloon, near the old Casino, in 39th Street, that he was going to send his wife to California (to avoid publicity!), and if I started any of my monkey shines, he was going to have Big Tim Sullivan railroad me to the insane asylum.

He happened to say this in the presence of some newspaper men. They were friends of my sweetheart, also a pencil-pusher. Later that night, these boys got hold of Nick, and told him to lay off Chicago May and the asylum stuff, because they were for me. He promised to do so.

The second "suicide" has to do with the sweetheart newspaper-man, just mentioned, and my second, and last, husband, Sharpe:

At the time of my marriage to Sharpe, as I have mentioned earlier in this chronicle, my regular sweetheart was working on a Chicago paper. He happened to return to New York, but did not know I was married, until I flashed the

certificate on him, one morning, at our breakfast table. He was furious, but cooled off, apparently, when I told him it was none of his business. I owed him nothing; and he had nothing on me. He left the house that night. Up to that time, the marriage had been kept a secret, and my husband and I had not lived together.

Sharpe and I then decided to make one more night of it, and settle down and live together at his mother's home in New Jersey. We visited all the resorts, good and bad, mostly bad, and I went home, alone, to my apartment, from which my lover had vamoosed.

I was in bed, pretty drunk and sick, when the colored maid brought in a man who wanted to see my face. I covered myself up, and told him to go to the hot place. It afterwards turned out that he only wanted to identify me.

In the morning when I got up, and went to breakfast, everybody had a newspaper and was laughing. My husband was supposed to have deserted me, et cetera, and I had committed suicide.

It seems my sweetheart, out of spite at me for getting married, called up the papers and gave them the alleged story. He told me, afterwards, that one paper asked, "Is she dead?" and he said, "No." They replied, "Isn't it too bad. What a pity she did not finish it!"

After breakfast, I was besieged by reporters, all day long, wanting to know the ins and outs of the suicide.

That same night, my husband had gone home to his people and knew nothing about the "suicide." That morning, the Sharpe family found out about the marriage, for the first time, in the Newark papers—and also about the suicide. Pandemonium broke loose. They did not know whether to be pleased or sorry. Poor Jim was all broken up on account

of my sudden "death." We had had such a good time together, the night before.

Then came the question about burying me. My husband spoke up, and said, "She is going to be buried with my father, in our vault in Brooklyn." This must have ruffled his poor old mother, because she answered, immediately, "Then, when I die, bury me over in Philadelphia, with my family."

The matter was undecided, when my husband and his brother, Joe Sharpe, went over to New York to make the funeral arrangements. Jim was too grief-stricken to go up stairs to view the remains, and sent his brother up. I opened the door for Joe, and he nearly dropped.

I said, "Hello, Joe! Come have a drink." Somebody started a lively air on the piano. Joe was flabbergasted. I ran down stairs and brought up my delighted husband, who almost fainted when he saw me. We had a party.

That night, I went home to the Sharpe family. They were very nice, never hinted at who I was and never mentioned anything about the suicide.

In short, except on the one occasion I have mentioned, I have never tried to commit suicide. Then I was drunk and mad. Furthermore, I have never wanted to die, even in prison. Not that I was afraid to die, but because I enjoyed living. When I went under a severe operation, and felt myself slipping, I willed to live.

I am an agnostic, so I can't fear what I don't know anything about. Bullets have been shot in anger, at me, and around me, but I can't say that I was afraid. Somehow or other, I do believe there may be a future life, with rewards and punishments. But nobody can make me believe that a Supreme Being, superior to man, is going to condemn

anybody to everlasting punishment. That wouldn't even be human, let alone God-like.

I have another thought on the matter, which I got from reading one of Oscar Wilde's books. I forget which one. What he said was that honest effort to repent a wrong, and to make reparation, was an attribute of man which would square his account with the Judge of the Universe, be he ever so bad.

CHAPTER XII

WITH THE LIMEYS

When I went to London for the first time, I did not do much real work. I was busy getting acquainted with my fellow crooks and the lay of the land. Things were different. The police were more polite, the Johns were keener for justice, and the law did not seem to recognize any difference between a nobleman and an artisan. There was more liberality but more strictness of procedure. It was not so easy to stall or to use money or influence. There were fewer politicians.

I was stopping at the Arundel Hotel, on the Thames Embankment and needed some ready cash. I did not want to start up a panel-racket, but I had to have money immediately. When evening came, one day, I went out without any definite plans. As I passed the National Liberal Club, I dropped my handkerchief. A big Englishman came running after me and returned me my mouchoir. He was thanked in a very timid manner.

The John asked me, then, if I would have a glass of wine. I hesitatingly accepted the invitation. We went into the Bodega, just off the Strand. I couldn't help but notice he had two diamonds, the largest, I think, I ever saw. He turned out to be a big bookmaker, Harry Taylor, and was going to the races the next day. On being asked if I would meet him at Charing Cross Station at 6 o'clock in the evening, I stalled, but finally agreed.

We had a lot of chatter. He wanted to know where I lived, and I told him at the Metropole. Nothing would do but he must walk down that far, so I had to go into the hotel and take the lift. I was afraid he might ask about me, but he didn't.

The next night I met my prospective victim, in accordance with the appointment. I told him I did not want to go to a public place, but would go to a private room. One of my friends had gone to a chemist's shop, told a cock-and-bull story about not being able to sleep, and secured some chloral for me. He got one good dose.

The bookie treated me to a five-bob dinner, the cheapskate! He talked incessantly about himself and how he had women eating out of his hand. I got a bottle of brandy and steered the John to a room in a side street. He was lit up by the time he got there; but I shot a few more Mickey Finns (double drinks) into him. He was in splendid trim. He had removed his high silk hat and coat. I slipped his little drops into the last drink. In a few minutes he was gone, dreaming, no doubt, of his conquests.

All I had to do was to pull the rings off his fingers. He had a lovely horseshoe pin, a diamond-studded watch and about one thousand pounds in notes, which I also took. Then I searched through his clothes and found he had made a memorandum, on a card, of the bank-note numbers. This I promptly burned. Did he think I was so silly as to leave a clue like that!

From there, I went to a fence, Bella Freeman, in Whitechapel, and disposed of the stuff. She told me she had to be cautious with Yanks, because they were so sharp that they would sell her swag, and then steal it from her. She certainly was frank to me, thinking I was Irish. This gave me an idea,

so I, when her back was turned, robbed her of a package of unset stones, worth about two hundred and fifty pounds. This, with what she paid me for the rings, etc., gave me a fair price for my work. When Bella died, she had diamonds worth a king's ransom. She left most of her estate to the Church, and spent a fortune trying to identify Jack the Ripper, who killed the unfortunate woman on her property.

I continued at work, keeping away from the mob, free-lancing. One day I was strolling along the Strand, when who should I run foul of but Taylor. He raised a commotion, and I was arrested. I made believe I did not know him. The landlady could not identify me. Bow Street Police Station turned me loose. They trailed me all night, trying to find out where I lived. I took a late train to Brighton, for the sea air. The dicks became tired out, and I lost them. I returned to my rooms the next day. That closed the job.

One evening, late, I was resting from my labors, when in blew a little friend, Whitechapel Harry, a dip. He threw down a pocketbook, containing a few sovereigns and a lot of papers, and said he had lifted it from a dick on a bus. This interested me mightily. I always liked to examine bulls' writings. Going through this batch, I saw, "info. fm. Tim Oakes, Antique Shop, City Road," written on a small sheet of paper, together with the name of a friend of mine who had just been jugged.

Tim Oakes was the King of Panel Workers, trusted by all the crooks. If a man kicked free of America, he could lay up with Mr. Oakes, in perfect peace and quiet, even if wanted for murder. I tipped off Ruby Michaels, and showed him our "trustworthy friend" was a stool-pigeon. Ruby knew everybody and passed the word along. The dick's information did the authorities no good, and Tim Oakes much

harm, but I was surprised, and am so still, that nobody knocked him off. The underworld, however, is suspicious of tips and wants to know their source.

When I was raising money to bribe Guerin out of Devil's Island, I was lucky enough to be in on a deal with Baby Thompson (my lover at that time), Cockney McManus, and Billy Haynes, then known as Wall Street Billy. The deal was pulled on a Dublin contractor, a very rich man. It took Baby nearly a year to worm himself into the guy's confidence.

Now the rich Irishman thought he saw his way clear to make a killing by buying certain mining shares, which was fair enough. But the vice of the whole transaction was that the sucker hoped to make big profits by buying the shares, way below par, from a "drunken" miner, who "didn't know any better." The "poor miner," Cockney, was supposed to have been the original locator of the claim.

The deal was pulled off in the Langham Hotel. All I did was to handle the "cablegrams" to and from our "offices" in New York and Chicago. Our letter-heads were modest and substantial-looking. No fly-by-night stuff! That wasn't our way of handling the game. The covetous contractor was stuck for twenty thousand pounds, and it served him right.

I was just wild to get my hands on my divvy, but I only got a few thousand for the risk I took. Of course, we had been under heavy expense landing the gudgeon. Baby Thompson was jealous of me, and thought I was trying to get to Guerin. But this English boob was not a bad fellow, even though, like most English crooks, he was yellow. I got five thousand dollars out of him to fix up a little home and live quietly, just so that he could come to see me. I

never got the little home. The money went to the Guerin fund.

When I came back from South America to London, I wanted to hide myself until I could get my bearings, so I went to a place in Mornington Road. I was simply known as a decent woman of means. I always went to this respectable landlady's house, when I wanted a rest. While I had been away, however, she had got some girls into her house. They were what are known as soldiers' molls, *i.e.*, women of easy virtue who are not professionals.

The place was not far from the Albany Street Police Station. More men came there than would have come to a sporting-house. The poor, simple landlady was not even getting extra room-rent from the bums. One night I was reading, by the open fire, in my room, which was next to the front door. In broke the bulls. The Chief Inspector knew me, and shouted, "Hullo, May, when did you get back? I thought you were in South America."

He asked me a lot of questions, which I answered more or less truthfully. I had returned about a week ago. I was resting, and came direct from the boat. He laughed. I told him what rent I was paying, and how I thought it was a decent house. Then he explained the cause of the raid, complaints of neighbors, and other bologna.

Anyhow, they pulled the poor old landlady. Among other things, she told the magistrate she had a wealthy lady from Brazil staying with her. Up spoke a cop and interrupts, "Yes, Chicago May, known to the police of the civilized and uncivilized world." This woke up his honor, the magistrate. So the newspapers came out in large head-lines. Once more I got to work.

My next move was to secure an apartment in Bloomsbury

Square, where I started the creep in a new style of my own invention. I did all the work myself, so that I did not have to split with anybody. The plan was simple enough, but, like most simple plans, it was a wonder no one had dropped to it before. I robbed the John before he got into bed, threw the loot on the floor and footed it under a bureau which had low castors. To do this, it was only necessary to do a little more caressing than usual.

I was down the Strand one day, with a heavy veil over my face, when I ran into Chief Inspector Kane, from Scotland Yard, "Sure," said he, "don't cover your pretty face. I would know that straight back of yours anywhere." He told me, then, how the police got Guerin, when he was hiding in London, and the French had a query out for him, because they wanted to extradite him. I had been wrongly accused of betraying him to the police. I tell more about this in another part of this book.

While I was still living at my Bloomsbury-Square apartment, I came across my evil genius, my former maid, Emily Skinner, who by this time had tied up with the Phony Kid and his wife, and had an apartment in Kenton Street. I knew her, later, for a liar, and a low-bred cockney from the purlieus of Whitechapel. The smart American women hired her to do their sewing and laundry, as she was a very fine needlewoman.

At different times she had acted as maid for Mrs. Gleason, Mrs. Annie Sullivan, and other crooks; but I spoiled her by treating her too well. Then Guerin made use of her services. She visited him while he was in Brixton Prison, and she thought he would have her for his girl, out of gratitude. She was disappointed, because Eddie was still too conceited to fall for Emily. He married an American girl who stuck

by him for a while and then ran away with Dan, the Dude.

At any rate, I went to Skinner's apartment, and there I first met Charlie Smith, the d'Artagnan of crooks. He had just left Guerin at Brixton, where Smith had been confined on a burglary charge and had beaten the case through some mysterious influence or other. Guerin tried to get Charlie to cocaine my face and disfigure it by cuttings. Though Charlie, at that time, had not seen me, he refused to harm a woman, being a gentleman from Virginia, and not a product of the Chicago stock-yards.

After Smith and I got acquainted, and we started to live together, we decided to do a diamond broker. I had met him some weeks before and it was planned to trim him when we were sure he had bought certain jewelry at Hatton Garden. Smith fixed the panel in the door. Instead of arranging it in the door of my room, he chose the bathroom door, which was identical in size, shape, and finish with the other one. Then the doors were exchanged. Smith was not the kind to let a woman do all the work and shoulder all the blame. He wanted to be the head of the partnership and the provider. He had just come from South Africa, where he had sold his gambling place, and had plenty of money to loaf for a while.

The trap was sprung as soon as the fly was lured into the spider web. Smith lifted a large package of Bank-of-England notes and a small package of uncut stones out of the broker's pockets. The notes were replaced with stage-money, and pebbles were wrapped in the same paper where the diamonds had been. I was pounding away on the piano to deaden any suspicious noises which might be heard during the shifting of the scenery.

By this time the John was getting embarrassingly amorous. But just at this point, Skinner, dressed in her maid's uniform, burst into the room all excited, to tell me that my sister was dying and to go to her at once. The jewelry dealer was quite disappointed, got into his discarded clothes, felt his inside pockets for his valuables, and came down stairs in a hurry. Smith lost no time in switching doors. I jumped into a cab, crying, and the John faded away.

We changed quarters immediately, and never went there again. We never knew whether the sucker squealed or not. If he did, and could point out the place, who would have thought of looking for a panel in the bathroom door! You must have real proof in England, to convict.

Charlie and I only got a few thousand pounds from the fence for the proceeds of this robbery. We went to San Remo, Italy, taking a trip to Monte Carlo several times. I was afraid of France, having been deported from there, and Monaco was a protectorate of the French.

We returned to London after a month's vacation. Dan McCarthy fixed a job for Charlie, near Regent's Park. Charlie sneaked into a banker's room, intending to get his keys to remove some money from a safe. The blighter jumped up and covered him with a gun. My man was arrested and was defended at the trial by Arthur Newton, who defended us at the trial for the Guerin shooting. To the mystification of Scotland Yard, Charlie escaped them on this attempted burglary charge.

It was on Trafalgar Day, October 21, 1898, coming from Eastbourne, that I met an English-speaking Brazilian. We got off the train together and went up to see the crowds around Nelson's monument. After standing some time in the chilly fog, he suggested that we get something hot to drink.

I walked him to the Garrick restaurant; he ordered two hot Scotches, and we sat listening to the music for nearly an hour. I hinted several times that I would like to have another drink, but he pretended not to hear. If I had not seen his wallet was stuffed with notes when he paid for the drinks, I would not have wasted my time on him. He showed me a picture of his home in Southern Brazil, which he also fished out of that poke.

After a while he said he would like to go with me, if it did not cost too much. I grew very angry at him for taking me to be that sort of a person. When he found out there was to be no expense for a party, he grew very affectionate, and was for leaving pronto. The waiter gave us an awful look as we rose, because we had not been much as customers. I winked at the lackey, however, when he helped me on with my coat, and slipped him a shilling.

Arriving in the street, I suggested a cab, but the miser said no, he liked exercise. He excused himself, to go to the lavatory, to change, as I afterwards found out, the position of his money. Wasn't he the careful sinner! I had a joint with an American woman near the Hunter Street Police Station, two doors away, to be exact. I walked the guy through Enesely Gardens, till I, myself, was lost. I had to ask a cop for my street.

There were two rooms in the house, separated by sliding doors. Here was where we worked. The head of the bed was toward the doors, and a sofa was placed across the doors, which were draped with heavy curtains. The bed had rounded ends so that they could not be used for a clothes-rack, and the sucker had to put his clothes on the sofa. I kept laughing and fooling to deaden any creaking noise. My partner slid the doors, searched the clothes and extracted

the valuables. He had shifted his bank-notes from his wallet to an envelope in his inside vest pocket, where he had his passport and other papers, leaving a few sovereigns in the poke. We didn't touch the latter. My pal was a quick worker, but she seemed slow to me that day, while I was putting on the performance.

Suddenly there was a loud knocking on the doors, and my side-kick said, "You've got a man in there. Don't you know this is a respectable house?"

The sucker jumped into his clothes. I kept arguing with the irate "landlady," telling her the man was my guardian, and was on a business call. The upshot of the matter was that we both went down into the street. The John was none too pleased at the interruption and disappointment. I told him he should worry, because he was nothing out. He protested that he would rather have gone with a regular girl and got what he wanted, even if he had to give her five bob.

I was quaking in my boots for fear he would try to blow his coin. He felt his envelope, but it said nothing, because it was refilled with cut-papers, to size. I left him at the corner of the next street.

There was a fire-house in the neighborhood. Back comes the guy the next day with the police, having located us through the fire-house, after going into several places which looked like ours. The police knew me but did not know my pal, the landlady. She was dressed like a charwoman, and was carrying groceries, when the two of us were stopped. She protested I was respectable as far as she knew, but I was arrested.

She ran into the house to find where I had hidden the money. There was a large amount of gold of my own and about five hundred pounds of the sucker's notes. She found

the money and got her man to take it and my trunk to her mother's house.

At the police station, the dicks gave me the usual drizzle about my landlady squawking, but I only laughed at them. Anyhow, the Brazilian would not appear against me when I would not admit anything or come across. It seemed he was living with his wife at the Metropole.

I was discharged, but I did not go right home. Instead I went into the Bedford Head Hotel bar to get a drink, and came across another John. I thought I might just as well trim him while the going was good. When I got him to my room, there were my landlady and two detectives.

This made me mad and I yelled, "What the hell are you fellows doing in my room? Get out of here. I pay rent. My home is my castle." They laughed and agreed with me, and hoped I would have a good Christmas. The landlady gave them half a Jimmy (two dollars and a half), which they appeared to be tickled to get. But it was bad business for me. I did not get a chance to rob the second sucker. As soon as he saw the cops, he beat it.

Once I lost out after trimming a John, because some one found the pocketbook in an area-way and turned it in to the police before I could return and empty it. Let me tell you about that some one, an army officer. He used to come to my room, but, what between liquor and natural asininity, he was no good to me or himself. When he turned in the poke, he told them he was captain so-and-so of the Umpteenth foot, although he was a deserter.

Two bulls went over to Regent's Park barracks, found out he hadn't been there for weeks, and was wanted. As far as I was concerned, I got out of the previous case on bail. I would not have been held if I had not had two hundred and fifty

pounds on me, mostly in gold. It weighed like a ton, and the dicks wanted to get their claws on it. Ultimately, the judge discharged me.

Then I demanded my money back. I went from pillar to post, from court to detectives, from police to Scotland Yard, and couldn't get that dough. They were making trouble for me, so I got a lawyer and summoned the Commissioner. The judge got mad because they had ignored his order to return the money. Then I was told to go again to the Yard to get it, but I got high-hat and demanded that they come with it to me. A nice thing if a lady had to run round after public servants!

I put up a yelp to the sympathetic judge, told him I was too weak from hunger and exhaustion to walk for my money; that I had no money but what the dicks had robbed me of, and that my landlady had put me out because of my trouble. His Worship was a darling, called a Court missionary, told him to take me to a restaurant for breakfast, and then take me in a cab to Scotland Yard, see that I got my money, and to report to him. He was bound to see that I got my rights. The dicks affected to sneer, but I had the last laugh.

But to return to my fool officer. I got him a place in Whitechapel to hide. In no time, the blighter was pestering me with complaints about his quarters. I told him to give himself up, but he was too much of a coward to do that. I couldn't peach on him. In desperation, I sent him down to Pevensey, the historic place near Eastbourne, near where the Normans licked the Saxons. He played the part of an invalid officer, back from the Boer War. He had nerve enough to take part in the Eastbourne meet.

I kept sending him money. His demands, however, be-

came so great and frequent that I had to ship him to New York, at my own expense. The last I heard of him was that he had been struck by a street car at Dead Man's Curve, 14th Street, New York, and killed. The Sons of St. George buried him in Jersey City. But I was not done with him!

He had written me a letter, and by a turn of Fate, it was in my trunk when I went to help Eddie Guerin in Paris, a year later. In the billet-doux, this sappy fool wrote how he felt like a cad for leaving his regiment in time of war and how never again could he come back to the dear old mother-land. It seemed according to the letter, that, after all, Mother Britannia was a kind parent—and all that sort of thing. I kept the missive for a joke to show my friends.

But the public prosecutor read it with great feeling at the French trial. It proved to his satisfaction, if not to mine, that I was a modern Delilah, though my officer hadn't had a hair-cut that I know of, and that I had caused a man to become a traitor to his country, when it was in the throes of war. They also read a letter from my husband, telling how he had forged his mother's name to get money to send me.

Another London case, concerning an American: I picked him up at a Covent Garden ball. I had a girl friend, nicked the Yank quick, passed the dough and the trailer excused herself, on account of feeling faint, to plant the loot. The John was very drunk. Toward 3 A. M., he had spent his last change and reached into his pocket for his wallet. When he found his evening coat empty, he roared like a bull, terrifying the ladies present. I tried, without avail, to quiet him. It was no use. We were put out into the snow and a bobby soon had us in charge. I slipped one of my diamond rings into the sucker's pocket, and cried copiously all the

way to Bow Street Station in the cab. He had no money; but I had some change, in my gold net-bag, for the trip.

His tale was that I stole five hundred dollars, American, and one hundred pounds, British, in notes, from him. I kept shouting, "It's a lie! Give me back my ring you took from me." The Sergeant was very nice and said, "Don't cry, Miss. Did you take his money?" I replied, "What money? I want my pretty ring back." I was wearing other rings and big diamonds in my ears.

Then the Sergeant asks the American if he took my ring. That baby was ass enough to call the Sergeant a "damned fool." "Take him back and search him," says the Sergeant, quiet like.

The sucker said, "I am a Son of St. George."

"I don't care if you are a Son of St. Peter," was the answer.

Sure enough, he had my ring. The Yankee was raving mad by this time, cursing everybody. Counter-charges were duly entered. Both of us were locked up.

In the morning we had a hearing in camera. The John was a guest of a dignitary of the Anglican Church who lived at Hampstead. A big lawyer and a clergyman appeared for my victim. He withdrew his charge, and I did mine, after I got my ring back. The lawyer said it was possible some one else beside me had picked the American's pocket. I told the lawyer I had given the man the ring to admire and that he had put it into his pocket and would not give it back to me. However, I said I would forgive him because I thought he must have been drinking.

My first London arrest, after coming back from France, occurred this way: The authorities did not know I was at large. Montpellier did not notify Paris. I left prison under

the protection of the Dames Patronnesses and kept my word to quit the country. In France, each province is independent of all the others, in this matter of prison routine. Paris, therefore, had not notified London.

I met a German merchant in the Russell Hotel. I took him to a room, where Skinner, who was quite diminutive, was hidden under the table. The smart Alec put his clothes on the chair right beside her. She relieved him of nearly five hundred pounds, some of which was in German money. Off he went to the police and gave a good description of me.

It was just an accident that a dick saw me, recognized me, and followed me home, a few days later. Then it filtered through his thick skull that I must be the one wanted for the robbery of the German.

I was arrested and brought before a magistrate. When I would not agree to have the case settled there, unless they promised to acquit me, I was held for court, went before a jury and was found "not guilty," for lack of evidence. Contrary to the rules, Judge McConnell saw my record before trial. They are supposed to wait until conviction for that, both in England and America.

I saw the judge looking at my photograph and eyeing me, while the case ahead of mine was being tried. But, notwithstanding all that, I'll say this for him, he almost told the jury to find me not guilty. He stressed the fact that the John said I never went near his clothes, and was sure that some one else must have got into the room. "That let's her out," says the judge.

Pauline Washbourne and I trimmed an Irish absentee landlord one evening. He had just been collecting rents, and was carrying eight hundred odd pounds. Pauline wasn't used to big swag like that. We went to a wine room in

Shaftesbury Avenue and had supper. If you pay ten shillings extra, you are not bothered there. Pauline was sitting in the boob's lap. He had his vest open. She pulled his leather and handed it to me. I emptied it, stuffed a napkin into it, and handed it back. It was replaced.

There were all denominations of bills, mostly in Irish greens from five to fifty pounds each. Then we went walking in Piccadilly Circus. After a while, the John felt his pocket to make sure he had his wallet, bade us good-by, and boarded a bus. We started for a bus, too, but we got confused, and blessed if we did not try to get into the same one our guy was on. I did not know London so well then as I did later. There was our sucker on top, shaking his hand at us. We beat it p. d. q.

Then we went down to the Continental, where the girls used to go and sit in evening dress, to catch men. It was called the Cow-shed. You pay so much for a reservation. When a gent comes in, he is ushered to your table. We were wearing shirt-waists, serge skirts, collars and neckties, the American style at that time. The waiter would not let us sit down, we looked so much like bums, though we had enough dough to have bought the joint, almost. We had to go to a private room. After ordering wine and supper, we had a twenty-pound note changed.

Then our trouble began, getting rid of the notes. I went to Cook's and had the Irish bills changed into American money. We finally went to Birmingham to change the English notes; because we were leery of London. There never was anything more heard of the Irish landlord. I hope his tenants did not suffer.

Arthur Newton, the London lawyer, who wrote "My Twenty Years Among Criminals," and included a true chap-

ter about me, defended me, the first time, in 1900. Julia Barrington, an old Dutch woman, who ran a notorious creep joint at 51st Street and 6th Avenue, New York, invaded the English metropolis with four girls, and ran a very successful place for a while, during the Paris Exposition. She tried to get me to tie up with her, but I preferred to work on my own. Eventually, I got one of her girls away from her and worked with the girl. Julia was a fixer in New York and had pull with the wardmen and downtown. The free lances had to steer to her joint or get pinched. But this wasn't New York. There was no syndicate system.

What does the slob do, but get hold of an English bull, known as Jew Boy, and tell him I was Chicago May. This was the way the London dicks first knew me by my monoger. Up comes Jew Boy and greets me as such. Crooks don't like too much publicity. It hurts business. I was mad, laid for fat Julia, saw her in a cab, yanked her out, pulled off her wig, and beat her up. She retaliated by creating a commotion in front of my house with a big American nigger.

Shortly after this I was getting into a cab with a sucker. Up cames Grace Fowler, one of Julia's girls, a Southerner, and said to my John, "Don't go with her, Mister. She's a thief."

"Thank you, Miss," says my sucker and beats it.

I turned on Grace. It was in front of the Public Library, near Trafalgar Square. I beat her good and hard, and had her up against the wall, pounding her. A crowd gathered and the flower-girls pulled me away. A Bobby was coming, so I went off quickly to attend to my usual business, until quitting time.

I finally walked up Wells Street, near Oxford, to a saloon frequented by some of my gang. While I was having a drink

with a few of the boys, in sauntered Jew Boy, the dick. He accused me of having a fight with a girl and pulling out her five hundred dollar earring. When I laughed at him, he put me under arrest. An Irishman named Googan went my bail, not from the police station but from Holloway Jail, the next morning. When the lawyer found out I was known to the police, he promptly raised his fee.

The magistrate asked Grace, "What do you do for a living?"

"I'm a milliner," was the answer.

"With a five hundred dollar earring," interrupted I.

"Silence!" said the Judge.

When His Honor asked me what I did, I told him I ran around the Strand, picking up suckers.

"What is that sort of business?" inquired the old bozo.

"Millinery," I replied.

"Do you mean, this lady picks up men?" said the magistrate, a gleam of intelligence coming into his eyes.

"Sure!" said I. "That is the trouble. She's sore because I'm taking her trade. I took her John away."

"John who?" he wanted to know. All the court was laughing. I explained.

"Oh, really!" says he. "Six of one and a half dozen of the other. No jury would convict. Discharged. Next case."

When we got out in the corridor, I surely did call that English dick a variety of fancy names. He threatened to have me deported, but I grinned and said, "Sure, to Dublin. Hurry, and I'll have time to catch the night-boat at Holyhead." You see, it suited my purpose, then, to let the authorities think I was a British subject. When they finally did deport me, they were not sure I was an American. My gang

made war on Julia, and she soon had to retreat to New York.

One night, in Café Royal, I met Louis Tewkesbury, the famous bucket-shop operator. He had been arrested in New York in the Imperial Hotel. I knew him when I heard him talking in French to his friend. It wasn't long before I was wise to the fact that he had a large wad on him.

Just as I was taking him to my room, out jumped a big English dick, and I cracked him in the jaw. My John disappeared, and I was arrested for something else which had happened before. I only had two sovereigns on me, which I concealed in my mouth. They discharged me, after they had saved Tewkesbury. I suppose he paid handsomely for public protection. It wasn't fair to me, though.

I once sewed a hundred pounds into a feather-bed in London and moved, temporarily, to Brighton. When I returned, after about two weeks, I got my room back. The money was gone. I never could find out who got it. I could stake my life on the honesty of the landlady. It probably was discovered by some bum with a hunch.

A few months before I was arrested in the shooting case, Charlie Smith, his partner, Louis Lorenzano, a young Italian, from Milan, who was Smith's partner in South Africa, and myself tried to pull off an elaborate job and failed. Ruby Michaels, the fence, attended to the details. Louis was the coachman and drove me in an open barouche bearing a temporary coat-of-arms to a jeweler's in the Strand, near Charing Cross Station. It was about noon, at which time, as we had noted, the help was usually out to lunch, leaving the shopman alone.

Louis jumped down and told the proprietor, "her ladyship" would like to speak to him at her carriage, because she

was an invalid. Charlie was set to dart in and grab a tray of diamonds, which were on exhibition behind an iron grill, held in place merely by a reachable hasp and staple. This, also, had been noted in advance. Smith started to do his part of the game, but, as luck would have it, the shopkeeper saw him enter the store. Excusing himself, he ran after Charlie. There was nothing to do but buy a solid-gold collar button.

It was a shame! We had to drive away; and Louis' make-up was so fine, too! He had a beautiful livery and a birth-mark painted on his left cheek. The fence was out his expenses.

At one time I worked with a well-known English thief, Shirty Bobs. Once, he owned a fashionable club, frequented by persons of very high quality, incog. In my time, he was a hotel-thief. Among other places, he worked the Langham. He met me by appointment, telling me to bring a raincoat, and leave it near him in the lobby. When a new arrival checked in, he was to cover a jewel-case. I was to keep my eyes open. A whole evening was spent this way, without an opportunity to pull off something. So I quit. The risk, trouble, and uncertainty were too much for me to be worth my wasting my time.

Another night, I was given a key to enter a room in the Russell Hotel. It was "home" for a gambler, who came in early in the mornings with "fortunes" in winnings—if he won. I was under his bed for five mortal hours, one night, but he never came. I had to leave, because the maids would have soon been starting to work on that floor, which we had had timed.

In English hotels, the lackeys are so damned servile! If you make a move, they are on top of you to give you service. At the Langham Hotel, for instance, I had to keep tab on

people of note—time of arrival, number of rooms, maids, jewel-case carriers, etc. If I tried to look at the register, the clerk was there, offering to help me and asking very inconvenient questions. I simply had to quit Shirty Bobs' lay.

Gamblers in England are quite different from what they are in the United States. This may be illustrated by the case of pretty Bessie Crawford, of Richmond, Va. Bessie attended all the race-meets, and knew all the racing-men, gamblers, jockeys, backers, and horse-owners in the United Kingdom. She was living in fashionable Mayfair and got the dope about an American gambler having lost heavily in a fashionable club in St. James Street, the night before. Her informant, a then well-known American, named Knowles told her the loser had cleared out, to try his luck on the Continent.

What does Bessie do but call on the sporty proprietor of the gambling joint, weeping and bawling. Her story was that it was her husband who had lost the money, which was all of their savings for years, and was intended for the opening of a little business. Lovely woman in tears—no scene wanted—bad publicity—only men of wealth allowed—mistake—sorry—check for 1275 pounds! A few weeks later, back came the gambler. When they refused to let him sit in the game, he raised Cain and got properly indignant at the reason given.

"I have no wife in this country," said he. "If she were here, I wouldn't let her interfere with me, anyhow, about the loss of a few thousand dollars. I'll sit in or know the reason why."

He did. The joint took the slap. They didn't dare do anything to Bessie. Just imagine a real wife going to an American gambling house to get money back. The strong-arm

squad can't penetrate with axes, with men manning the walls with sawed-off shot-guns. No wonder Americans operate in England.

But to return to Pretty Bessie: She fell for one of Clayton's jockeys, a colored man. She lived with him in London, introducing him to the gang as an Algerian prince. The Americans turned her down. She was glad, later, to mix with the lowest of the low. I urged her to drop the man and told her she couldn't live with him in America, where prejudice against such alliances is stronger than in England. But Bessie said she could live in Chinatown, if no place else. The last I heard of her, she, my former maid, Skinner, and another woman, Blonde Alice, who lived with a Chink, were palling it together, smoking opium and sinking fast. Poor Bessie, she was so clever and so highly educated!

The notables I have seen, dead and alive! Sir Henry Irving, in state, in Westminster. Queen Victoria's bier at Paddington Station, and at Frogmore, Windsor, from where she was buried.

I remember seeing old Gladstone slowly walking from the House of Commons one night. English Jenny stopped him and asked him to see her home, thinking to steer him to a creep-joint. The grand old man refused but gave her a half-crown for cab-fare. The cabbie thought she didn't know who Gladstone was and told her.

When I was with the "Belle of New York" company, I had a beautiful little house in Park Village, East, near the Serpentine. I shared it with Chrissie Carlile, an American actress. Poor girl, I have heard she was found dead, some years ago in Harlem, N. Y., with nothing but a nickel in her pocket-book. I know she returned to New York with the show. I stayed in London, because the pickings were easy.

Anyhow, through Chrissie, I got to know a number of the officers of the Horse Guards—the First Life, the Second Life, and the Blues.

Some are dead now. I kept up their acquaintances after Chrissie left. When one of the regiments was moved to Windsor, I received an invitation. I went to Holy Trinity Church to see the troops file in to divine service. I also went to see Queen Adelaide's tree in Windsor Park, and took the long walk out to Maidstone. At this place I visited the bookstore, kept by a very old man, who looked like George III and was said to be the natural son of that monarch.

While I was in historic Windsor, I put up at the White Hart, across from the castle. I shall never forget the good times I had. Among other enjoyable events was a trip to see the Henley Regatta. I was a guest on a house-boat, where I met Lady Scott and the Countess of Warwick. In later years, I met Her Grace in her own castle, not far from Leamington, on the road to Coventry. This is how that came about:

I was living with Baby Thompson, at the time. He had just finished some business in Leamington and suggested that we drive into Coventry through the Warwick estate. On our way, we stopped at the castle, like other visitors, to examine it on account of its age and historical interest. There are always a raft of visitors there. While we were waiting to be shown through, I asked a footman if her ladyship was at home. When he said yes, I told him to tell her Lady Smith would like to speak to her. The footman bowed and disappeared. Baby nearly had a fit.

In a few minutes, the lackey returned and ushered us into the presence. She was just entering politics at the time, and was a little taken aback, for the moment, when she saw us.

When I asked her if she remembered meeting me with Captain Ward, she saw the joke about Lady Smith, especially after I told her it was only an American trick to fool the footman. Then I introduced Mr. Thompson and her ladyship, personally, escorted us round the place. There was much to be admired, which pleased her mightily.

Among other things, the good soul saw me admiring the strawberry beds. Nothing would do, but we must have some of the fruit served in large green leaves. They were luscious.

On another occasion, about the same time, I had my photograph taken at a shooting-contest between the Horse Guards and the First Life Guards. This was at Runnymede, a meadow in Surrey, not far from Windsor. This is the place where the Barons, backed up, of course, by their yeomen, made that guy, King John, sign the Magna Charta. He broke it, all right, just as his successors have done, and are still doing.

CHAPTER XIII

THE THIEF'S FUNERAL

Even as a young crook, I had the reputation of always contributing liberally for funeral expenses of brothers and sisters of the craft. It was at a London funeral of this sort that I first met Eddie Guerin, as is related elsewhere herein. Some more, or less, true stories have been written about these particular obsequies, but none of them have ever told what led up to the death, and how I got into the affair as one of the principals. It might be just as well to give the facts from beginning to end.

One night, I was walking home with a crowd of American and English crooks. I had an abundance of hair, rolled in coils down the back of my neck. At that time, the English had a slang expression, "There's hair," similar to our present American slang, "So's your old man," or "For crying out loud." Some foreigner, happening along, pulled the slang expression I have referred to, presumably meaning it for me. The bull-headed Englishman with me, though he was nothing particularly to me, resented the remark. He hauled off and gave the foreigner a wallop. There was a cabstand right there.

The foreigner cried out to the cabbies, "What do you think of that!". One of them, George Kirby, having nothing better to do, and probably wanting to show off, promptly proceeded to hit my escort so hard that he was knocked

down and his skull was fractured against the curb. Somebody, of course, had to yell "Police"! There was none in sight, but they quickly responded, and on the run. I got a cab, and took Walter Finch, the injured man, to the University Hospital. Kirby was arrested. Finch died. The police knew us. All of us were held for the Coroner's Inquest. The dicks were sure they were going to get a lot of publicity, and I can't hate them for that. They either get too much credit or none at all, which isn't fair to them or the crooks.

First, the police told the cabby all about us, and then they urged us to testify against him. The result was that everybody stood pat against the common enemy. At the inquest, all our given addresses were carefully noted by the police. I was the first one called. My evidence was to the effect that the killing was the result of a drunken row; that it was accidental; and that I did not know who struck the fatal blow, though I had witnessed the whole affair. The rest of the witnesses followed suit. I was sorry for the cabman's mother. It really was an accident!

Finch, the dead man, was a trailer for panel-workers, a kit-carrier for burglars, and an outside-man for various sorts of crooks, who might need him on any particular job. When his usual business was dull, he drove a cab, looking for regular customers, with a weather-eye open for opportunities at his other line of work. He was an orphan. From a boy up, he had lived with the Cohens.

The Cohen family was a mongrel tribe, part Jew and part Irish. As may be judged from the name, it was the mother who was Irish. They kept a little shop, selling holy images, and other things, on the first floor, and living on the two upper floors. There were three sons and two daughters, all thieves except one daughter. The other daughter, Becky,

was, then, a panel-worker and confidence woman. Her man was Yankee Jack Hawkins. It was from this little shop that poor Finch was buried.

I shall never forget that cold, raw, gloomy day! Across the street, the Scotland-Yard men and the detectives and local dicks, from Bow Street, were lined up as if there was going to be a Lord Mayor's Procession. They eyed that little shop as if it was going to give them clues to most of the things they did not know, and never would know. All the crooks in London who were not too busy to attend were assembled to do honor to a humble brother who had passed out. There were representatives from out of town and from foreign parts. The two assemblages eyed each other like cats and dogs, but occasionally intermingled. I have seen a fox and a hound act friendly towards each other before a hunt.

The procession started. First came the carriages with the family and immediate friends, followed by those of the richer crooks, who came as a matter of duty. The ladies wore fur coats and crepe veils over dark hats. The gentlemen wore high silk hats, with crepe bands on the sleeves of their dark suits. Following the carriages, came men on horseback. The next contingent was composed of costermongers. They were Cohen's friends from Whitechapel with rings in their ears, wearing corduroy suits, and having red handkerchiefs round their necks. Interspersed in the parade were all shades and varieties of crooks. The rear guard was composed of what is known in America as panhandlers—professional beggars who are the friends and eyes and ears of crooks.

It seems there was some difference of opinion, before the funeral, as to how Finch was to be buried. We outsiders,

who only contributed money, flowers and sympathy, kept out of the purely domestic affairs of the family. You see, Finch was an Englishman and a Protestant, though nobody seemed to know exactly what denomination he favored. Cohen was a Jew, but he was not very particular in his religious observances. Mrs. Cohen was a Catholic. She stopped there, however, except on important occasions, like christenings, marriages, and funerals. Then, she was very strict. The children were what might be called indifferent, with the result that they did not even bother to vote on the subject. The head of the house, the mother, consequently, carried the election by a majority of one. It was decided to bury Finch according to the rites of the Holy Catholic Church, in the Catholic cemetery-lot of the family of Mrs. Cohen, the wife of the Jew-purveyor of Catholic religious goods.

When we arrived at Finchley Cemetery, the remains were taken into a small chapel, and placed at the foot of the altar. The little priest kept looking and looking. He did not know what to make of the motley gathering. There they were, thugs, strong-arm men, sneaks, second-story workers, dips, moll-buzzers, confidence-men, safe crackers, beggars and people who looked like the Lord's anointed. Eddie Guerin, Long Bob, Gus Miller, Bob Roberts, Kid McManus, Jimmy Lockett and a host of others, to say nothing of the women and girls, made up that burying-crew.

Tim Oakes, who afterwards turned out to be a stool-pigeon, was very drunk. While the priest was intoning the service, Old Tim would turn round and, in a maudlin stage-whisper, wiping his eyes, say, "Poor Walter, he's trailed his last guy." Many of the audience did not know how to handle themselves under the circumstances.

Some got up at the wrong time, and others sat down. Some bowed their heads at times, while others stood at attention, as if a drill-sergeant had his eye on them. The Protestants wouldn't kneel and most of the Catholics did not seem to know their lesson in this respect. Nothing was expected of the Jews with regard to etiquette, for this particular occasion. Many were crying, especially old Mrs. Cohen, who was so tight she could hardly stand up, what with pride in right-doing and other sentiments.

The funeral being over, and "dust to dust and ashes to ashes" having been said, we slowly dispersed. The law-abiding went their several ways. The crooks who had the money, or who did not have any other pressing engagement on hand, adjourned to the nearest public-house. Believe me, it was jammed with customers! The eaters and drinkers thinned out gradually, but the fewer their number the noisier and more boisterous they became. Late that night, the party broke up in a series of fights. This is generally the way thieves' parties break up after a funeral. When spirits are low, more spirits are often too exhilarating.

It has been said I became acquainted with Eddie Guerin at this funeral, because he beat up a man for insulting me. Eddie could do the beating, all right, but there was no need for it on this occasion. Usually I was quite capable of taking care of myself, and the men would stand back to see me turn the trick. No, Eddie and I met casually, and were introduced by a common friend.

CHAPTER XIV

LAWYERS

Needless to say, I have met many lawyers in my time—good, bad and indifferent. To paraphrase the old nursery rhyme, when they were good, they were very good, but when they were bad they had crooks skinned a mile. In general, however, I am a great admirer of the professior While some are double-crossing parasites, most of them are honorable men, living up to very high ideals. Their fees are in inverse ratio to their ability, often.

Of all the people I have trimmed, none deserved it more than my barrister. I took a fiendish delight in torturing him, mostly because he was conceited and hypocritical. I know I have not been ordained by the Lord to punish anybody, but I am telling you the truth. He tried to use me and was, in my opinion, properly stung.

A short time after the Spanish War, I was in London. I had married my second husband, and had left for a trip abroad. I went around to the very best places. One morning I met a young man, who I thought belonged to the family where I was stopping. He invited me out to lunch. The result of this meeting was that I was taken to a beautiful suite of rooms. Here, he ordered a magnum of champagne.

When we got ready to go, he fished into his pockets, and, superciliously, threw a handful of sovereigns on the table, as if to pay me off and be done with me. There were,

perhaps, twenty of them, a very tidy sum acquired in a short time. I left the money where it was for the time being, and had further converse with him. I told him I was with a show. He said he was a barrister. When I seemed to doubt his word, the young man went to his brief case and pulled out his photograph. He pointed out the wig and gown. It took little persuasion to get him to give me the portrait, autographed.

When the money was thrown so recklessly on the table, I thought I had met a nut. When he started to call himself The Honorable Archibald W——, and gave me his card, engraved "Three Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn," I thought I had run into the Grand Panjandrum. What was a poor girl to do, with such a sheep, baaing to be shorn! Then, too, he was so haughty. He tried to give me the impression that he was a foxy guy. I, on my part, said to myself, "I won't rob this bird. I'll blackmail him."

After the first seance he visited me a few times, but he seemed to act in a very chilly manner. He was either very wary or conscience-stricken. Then I asked him to spend a week-end with me. Apparently acquiescing in this proposal, a valise with several valuable toilet articles and twenty pounds was sent me by messenger boy. I waited for my prospective victim, but he never showed up. He must have gotten cold feet. I waited a while longer; and then I started to write him letters. Would you believe it, the boob wrote back!

After another while, I started asking him for money, beginning at ten and twenty pounds and getting up as high as fifty. He sent the money at first; and then he started to back out. Once I met him, accidentally on purpose, in front of Sam Nelson's tailor store, at 13 Hanover Street, Han-

over Square, West. The place has beautifully arranged French plate mirrors, so that you can look into the windows and spot your quarry when it comes along the pavement. I knew my barrister passed that way frequently.

I waited for him until he had a lady with him. "Pardon me," said I, "but seeing you, reminds me I was asked to tell you there is to be a meeting of your society to-night." Maybe the naughty boy was not flustered! I don't know what he told his companion. Anyhow, I got a note that same day by messenger, begging me not to pursue him in public and enclosing his check, of all things! for twenty-five pounds.

This kept up for some time, at frequent, but irregular intervals. He bought me first-class transportation to New York twice. I sold both of the tickets to show girls going home; but I had to sell at a loss.

One day I wrote him I was pregnant. Back comes a letter telling me to go to a woman near Paddington Station and have an abortion performed. "I will pay the bill," says this dub, "only don't mention my name"—and signs his name as large as life and twice as natural. I don't blame you in the slightest, if you don't believe this. It sounds fishy, but it is truth, just the same.

I am not pointing a moral. If it were not for men like this, crooked women would not have such an easy time in this life. But then, on the other hand, as you will learn from me, women are also easy marks, and stingers get stung. Perhaps the world's ledger balances.

When I received this letter, I was living in Duchess Street, Portland Place. The letter was so valuable to me that I put it into a safe-deposit vault in Chancery Lane. When I answered the letter, I told the writer he ought to be ashamed of himself to urge me to break the law, especially since

he was a barrister and knew more about the law than a poor, seduced girl like myself.

I told him, further, that I would go to the United States and have my baby. He got all excited, and gave me a couple of hundred pounds in notes. Then I asked him for gold so that I could have the notes for lying-in expenses. The final result was, he gave me the gold and bought the ticket. I went to America.

The reason I went so readily, this time, was that my husband, Sharpe, was importuning me to come back to him. I told the barrister, I was going to take the name of Sharpe, say I was a widow and await the arrival of the stork in an obscure village named Belleville, in New Jersey. With tears in his eyes, he promised to send me regular remittances for myself and the baby: He also told me to get some honest work to do, as soon as I could stand it, because it was "so easy to go wrong." Can you beat it!

When I got back home, I lived with the Sharpe family for some time, getting my remittances regularly. The Sharpes thought the letters were from my family in the Old Country.

One bitter cold day, I drove over to the Belleville (N. J.) Post Office, and got another letter from the barrister. He was hot under the collar, and called me a thief, a street-walker, and something worse. He said he had met one of my women-friends, who recognized him from his photograph, which I had shown her. She went right up to him in Gatti's, in the Strand, where he was dining, and told him about my doping a young officer from Aldershot, only a few days before I left England the last time. He called himself an ass and a fool to let me dupe him.

I got hot under the collar, too! The letter and the pros-

pective-loss of my "pension" made me mad. I never slept until I took the first boat sailing out. Mother-in-law Sharpe was told my mother was ill. She, good soul, bought me a first-class ticket on the Cunard Line. Incidentally, the last time I saw my husband, or mother-in-law, was when I left America on that trip.

When I arrived in London, I dispatched a messenger-boy to the barrister's office, demanding his presence at once. He came, instanter, all right! He was both surprised and frightened. Before I was done with him, he apologized for believing every Tom, Dick, and Harry that maligned me, said he was sorry he wrote the letter, and gave me fifty pounds.

It was not long before I found out my victim was broke, so I let up on him. You can't get blood out of a stone. He went to a ranch in Canada. I suppose everything happened for the best. He would have starved to death at his profession. All the work he ever did was to eat his dinner in Temple Bar with other briefless barristers.

I have gone into considerable detail in this comparatively unimportant incident in my life. It has not been published in detail. The reason is that such incidents are so incredible that they do not make good special-stories for the dailies and weeklies. The reporters know that such suckers exist, but they are trained to give the public plausible and dramatic stories. This affair with the barrister is so sordid and downright rotten, that many people would turn from it with disgust. I believe, however, that there are good, innocent people in this world, who can be shaken out of their ignorance, and made active for reform, if they are told the truth, plainly, bluntly, and candidly. Society, as at present constituted, isn't perfect by any means.

But to come back to lawyers; and, more particularly, those who represented me—and sometimes robbed me:

Arthur Newton defended me the first time I was arrested in London, and continued to represent me, off and on, down to, and including, the Guerin-shooting case, when I got a fifteen-years' sentence to Aylesbury Prison. He was a smart man, charged good-sized fees and knew the ropes. The last thing he said to me, when I went off to do my long-bit, was, "May, don't complain about anything, or they will land you in Broadmoor (the insane asylum)."

Newton defended Oscar Wilde in the Cleveland Street scandal case, and was a prominent criminal lawyer for about thirty years. He represented both big and little criminals, and fixed his fees according to his clients' ability to pay. Sometimes they cheated him, which made him sort of hard-boiled. Ultimately, the authorities landed on this lawyer, and he got three years. The English make their lawyers hoe a very straight row. One of them was disbarred for telling a jury he thought a murderer was innocent when he knew the guy was guilty. The jury believed the lawyer.

To skip round:

One lawyer defended one of my girl friends, Effie Ward, in New York. She had money in the bank and put it up for the protection of two sureties. I deposited the bonds in the City Treasury. She was held in one thousand-dollar bail; and the lawyer and I stood for her, with nothing to lose, because she had put up the collateral. Up came the lawyer to her rooms to see me. He was drunk. "Let's whack up the money, May," says he, "and let the old girl lie in jail." Can you beat that! Effie got out, or I would have known the reason why.

When I robbed a minister, one night, in New York, and

was pinched, I gave a certain lawyer two hundred dollars to take care of me. He never came near me, and never did anything for me, and refused to give the money back. That same burg seemed to have many crooked lawyers. I can't remember all of them.

A young lawyer defended me, in London, when I tried to rob Tewkesbury. He afterwards helped to defend Guerin in the extradition proceedings. There were three of them, the father and two sons. They were known as the biggest double-crossers in England. The father was lame, and was called the Devil-on-two-sticks. The sons were fair-looking young fellows, and one, afterwards, became a barrister. The old man was lawyer for the County Council; and the boys, solicitors for the underworld, hung around the police stations.

One night an unfortunate girl was nabbed in the Strand for soliciting. She got one of the young sons to represent her. She told him she had no money, but a friend of hers, living in Regent's Park Road, Gloucester Gate, would go her bail. The lawyer pricked up his ears at this fashionable address, and asked the young woman if she was a maid there.

"No," said the girl, "I go there to sit for company." Then she told him the whole story; and he got her off with a fine, which she paid. He also cautioned her never to go to Mrs. Martin's again.

The old man got the story from his young hopeful. As he was the official to prosecute disorderly houses, he straightway had a watch put on the house. It was a soft morsel for him.

Mrs. Martin lived in that house for twenty years, among retired army-officers, Indian officers and other ex-official neighbors. She never kept a girl in her house, and always

had the same old servants. Her clients were of high station. When the place was raided, the police found all sorts of degenerate and pervert devices.

The Devil-on-two-sticks pushed this case. The lawyer for the County Council got a big fee for every disorderly house he prosecuted. Maybe, he got pickings on the side. Mrs. Martin was fined, the place was closed, and the matter dropped.

Henri Roberts and Maitre Allaine, who spoke English and was educated in New Orleans, defended Guerin and me in the Paris-robbery case of the American Express Company. The latter was a very conscientious man, and defended quite a number of crooks for whom he was sorry. The peculiarity of the French courts is that they don't seem to have any rules of evidence. A witness can tell what somebody else told him or what he heard as a mere rumor. The American and English way gives more protection to the criminal; but think of the lot of innocent victims the French way secures, when the liars get in their fine work!

My other experiences with the same, or other, lawyers will be found scattered through this autobiography, at appropriate places.

CHAPTER XV

THE PARIS ROBBERY

As I have said I met Eddie Guerin for the first time, in London, at the thief's funeral, in the early Spring of 1901. I was twenty-five years old. I lived with him several months. The gang decided to rob the American Express Company's branch-office in Paris. Eddie had lost out in a job at Lyons, was sentenced to ten years, and served his time. He wanted to get revenge on the frog-eaters. After months of study and planning, it was decided to go to work. All hands agreed, however, that a bigger haul could be made if we waited until the Autumn. Gus Miller, Kid John McManus, and I were selected to help Guerin. This story has been told in newspapers and magazines several times. I shall tell the story, without frills, mentioning several things not heretofore told.

There is no doubt the game was big. The stalking had to be done in the very heart of Paris, in Rue Scribe. The prey was so powerful it would move heaven and earth to get back at us, if we failed. As the robbery was spectacular, the principals were rehearsed with great care, just as in any big stage-production.

At the appointed time, having previously studied the lay-out, I went to the company office. It was near closing time, and I asked the clerks a lot of inane questions. They shunted me from one to the other, each one wanting to be rid of me and clear up his work for the day. As everybody was more

or less distracted, and going out of his way to avoid me, I found it very easy to hide myself. I squeezed under a counter, in an out-of-the-way corner, used only for storing extra packages during rush hours.

The place was closed for the night, leaving only the negro watchman, and me, inside. I had to wait, crouching, a couple of hours before the negro went upstairs to attend to his watching business. When he did, I shifted a large inkstand near one of the windows (the agreed-upon signal). Then I drew back the bolts of the designated door. In came my confederates. They, too, had to wait for the negro. He took a long time to come down stairs to attend to his watching business. Finally, he came, like a good fellow, and was trussed up proper. It took a couple of hours to drill and charge the two safes. In the meanwhile, I went to the lookout beat, outside.

It seemed like an age before the first charge went off. The police station was close at hand. Along came the gendarme, sure enough, and volubly asked me in French where the explosion was. I replied, it was "over there," pointing in the direction where there were some large lights, opposite to that of the express office. As nothing else happened just then, the French policeman seemed to be satisfied and went on his way.

I was nervous. It seemed like an age before I heard the next shot fired. Shortly thereafter, the inkwell was moved back into place. My work was finished, then, so I went home to bed. Little sleeping was done by me, the balance of that night. I got up early, so as to be at the door when the maid came with coffee. This was to prevent her from noticing that my "husband," Eddie, was not in bed as usual.

Another period of waiting ensued, which was hard to en-

dure, but which ended with the appearance of the "husband." He was pleased beyond expression, told me the swag amounted to over fifty thousand dollars, and, what was still better, that no clues had been left behind. I was for leaving the town right off the bat. He was certain, however, it was much safer to stick until the excitement died down. Accordingly, we waited two days, and then started for London.

Everything might have gone well, if it had not been for Eddie's infernal conceit. He was very proud of his ability at slinging French. Two French dicks happened to ask him, in broken English, where they could find the dining-car. We had been posing as English travelers, but what does the chump do but answer the detectives in French that would do credit to an educated native. At that, the sans culottes did not know who they had in their clutches. They thought he was a French criminal they were on the look-out for.

Once they had him, the fat was in the fire. It took a half dozen men to overpower him. I went on alone, not appearing to know the man who was arrested. I had our share of the loot sewed in my clothing and packed in a Gladstone. I dumped some American-Express notes out of the window while we were going through a tunnel. Miller had been picked up on suspicion, the day before, with a burglar kit in his possession. The poor simp was subsequently convicted, because they found a letter from his girl to him, which had dropped out of his pocket to the floor, while he was tussling with the nigger.

It is axiomatic with crooks not to carry evidence of their identity on their person when they are working. But then, Gus was never a "yegg," as we Americans say. If Guerin had had the sense he was born with, he would not have drafted a man from another department to help him with

such work as we had on hand. We never, really, knew whether or not this tyro peached, but the letter put the bulls on the trail, which ended in our conviction.

Well, I finally got to London with the loot; and I had the time of my young life throwing the sleuths off my track. At Charing Cross Station, I had to jump a fence, getting a young customs' man to give me a hand, telling him my maid had disappeared with the key to my luggage, and persuading him to chalk it through O. K.

When I got to London, I and my impedimenta were loaded and unloaded by cabbies several times before I landed in the Gower Hotel, near the railroad station of that name. I had to do this because it is easy to trace people in London through the hotel cabs. At the station, the Chief Inspector yelled out "The Palace Hotel," which is a big one in Westminster. When I drove up there with two vehicles full of trunks, and what nots, I let the porters cart all of the stuff into the hotel lobby.

I was duly "mortified" that my father had made no reservation, but was quite sure he would put in an appearance at any moment. While waiting, I strolled outside and picked up a couple of four-wheelers near Whitehall. Then I came back to the hotel and said that maybe "Father" was to meet me at a private hotel, of the same name, in the West End. When they saw my street men, they protested that I would have been welcome to use the hotel force. I changed my mind, however, before I got many blocks away from the big hotel, and tried several places, looking for Mr. McEntee, my papa. After tipping liberally, at the several places, I wound up at the Gower, as stated, apparently a much-vexed young woman.

The first thing I did was to get out Guerin's clothes and

give them a thorough brushing, to remove any evidence of the dynamite, or other clues which might cling to them. After Eddie's clothes and mine had been separated and repacked, I took his over to the Euston railroad station. Then I drove for more than two hours to an ale-house near Battersea Park to see McManus and tip him the news that both Guerin and Miller were laid by the heels. I was afraid Miller would squawk, and the police would get the Kid in England.

I kept quiet in London for a long time, putting the swag into a safe-deposit box and hiding the key. The name given, of course, when I hired the box, was phony. Talking with one of the gang one day, I was impressed with the idea that no "strong box" was safe, under the circumstances. Accordingly, I removed the plunder to a private place of my own, where it was absolutely safe.

Subsequently, Scotland Yard combed the boxes, and discovered mine. It contained an old handkerchief which was never identified as mine. The flunky who was an attendant on the box-holders, later, swore his soul away when he testified he saw me go into my box thin and come out fat, with much enlarged calves and bust. Women's skirts were ankle-length in those days.

If it was not for liars and perjurers, the life of an ordinarily careful crook would be much easier than it is. I was guilty all right; but in many cases the innocent suffer. As a matter of fact, I drained out that box by making several trips with a satchel.

The dicks never did get the money. It was because I would not tell where I had hidden it, that I got such a long sentence. I was told I would be freed entirely if I would squeal; but I don't place much stock in such promises. Crooks have

small chance of enforcing such a bargain. That is the reason why a great deal of money is never recovered by the authorities. Their reputation in such matters is not good.

The dicks tied me up with the robbery and found out about the strong box, when they searched my private room after I had gone back to Paris. I had written a letter to my husband, and not having a stamp and not wishing to trust it to the maid, I tore it up and threw it into the fireplace. Although the German woman who cleaned out my room was so particular that she would not let a hair lie on the floor, she neglected to clean out the fireplace. This was meat for the sleuths. The letter was pieced together.

After I had recovered my breath, and taken all the precautions my schooling had taught me, I worked out a plan for the saving of Guerin. The result showed that I was not as smart as I thought I was—or the breaks went against me. I went to Paris and slipped five hundred dollars to Eddie, with some papers, while he was in the Palais de Justice, awaiting trial, so that he would have some ready-money to use to the best advantage. He knew the ropes.

Then I went to the American Consul and gave him a line of talk about my bad brother being in jail, the result of association with evil companions. His poor old mother, of a very respectable family, was supposed to be breaking her heart, hoping and praying to get him back to reform him. I was quite sure reformation under the circumstances was not only possible but probable. The young man had learned his lesson, etc.

But the Consul did not swallow the bait. He must have been tipped off by the dicks. There was a big reward out for us. I was followed and arrested.

I have now given the essential facts about this robbery,

which caused all sorts of excitement at the time. The general public, the authorities and the crooks were reading the news daily as if nothing else mattered. As I am not a newspaperman or skilled novelist, there has been no attempt on my part to paint scenery for a melodrama. Others can do that, and have done it, with respect to this particular incident. For me, outside of the prison sentence, it was only one event in a busy life. As soon as it was ended, my mind turned to other business.

CHAPTER XVI

MY FRENCH PRISONS

When I was arrested in Paris, for my share in the American Express robbery, I was taken to St. Lazare Prison. There I was kept a year, until my case was finally decided, and my lawyer had taken his last appeal. During that year I was brought before the Juge d'Instruction for examination. He held forth in the Palais de Justice, and I saw him fairly regularly every couple of weeks. I was always accompanied by soldiers with drawn swords, at both sides, and front and back. We had to walk up, perhaps, twelve or fifteen winding stairs to the august presence. After each hearing, I was returned to St. Lazare, which is within the city of Paris.

After waiting a year for trial, the dicks found a bag of explosives in the Euston railroad station, London. It was left there by a man, to whom I had given the tickets for Guerin's clothes, and to whom Eddie had also given a ticket, perhaps for this bag. Anyhow, he went into a funk, ran away, left the explosives in the station, and Scotland Yard got wise. The expert analysis of the stuff was said to show it was the same kind used when the safes were blown in Paris. Eddie was sent to Devil's Island for his natural life, but he did not do his bit. I got five years, and I didn't do mine. We appealed to the Court of Cassation, the highest court of appeal, sitting at Versailles, and lost out.

I was removed to Fresnes Prison, on a hill outside of Paris. I remained there three months, and was then moved to Clairmont. Here I met a French girl who had some friends. We concocted a plan of escape. We said we were Protestants, so that we would be put into the Quartier Protestante. There were very few girls there, probably only five or six. There were two Swiss Sisters on duty at a time. We planned, when one went away to lunch, to tie up the other one, open the wicket with her keys and escape. I was bound for Egypt. When we were moved over to our new quarters, however, we found the darned wicket had been built up and a big wall surrounded the place. We had to stay in the place we, ourselves, had selected.

On Saints' Days, which were a couple of times a week, we, in the Protestant Quarter, had to scrub the floors on our hands and knees. We had jumped from the frying pan into the fire. When they moved us to Montpellier, the authorities turned Clairmont into a barracks. We had only cold water, and no soap. We suffered extreme cold in this place. Getting nothing but black bread and garlic soup, we nearly starved. And I had been used to a life of luxury! They would not let us wear drawers, and we nearly froze. It was so cold the wash water, kept under our beds, would freeze. The Quartier Protestante was an old, dilapidated wing of the building. The Sisters were very cruel.

At Clairmont, it was nothing but pray, pray, pray. While I was waiting for my trial, they could not make me be religious. Now, I had been tried, convicted and sentenced. Things were different! The constant repetitions from the Bible, and the prayers, pretty nearly drove me mad. I would say I could not speak French, when they made me stand up to perform. Then I would start some old English rhyme or

jingle. It didn't sound as if it came from the Bible, no matter what the language might have been. Neither did it sound like a prayer. It might have been a curse. The Sisters would just yell, "Sit down, sit down!" And down I would sit!

I got very sick at Clairmont, so they sent me to the south of France. I was sent to Montpellier, seven miles from the Mediterranean, near the mouths of the Rhone River, where it was warm. This place is the seat of a famous university. There I had to work, but I was sick most of the time. I had to go to school, of which I thoroughly approved. They did not treat me so badly at Montpellier. I stayed there till I got my pardon.

When we were moved from Clairmont we were a sight, going through the streets of Paris. Each of us carried a bundle on her shoulder, and had a blue handkerchief round her head. I wore sabots. They were tough sledding. The French girls opened their bundles, and put on their high-heeled shoes. They were the limit: Prison clothes, kerchiefed heads (no hair was allowed to show), and the high heels. The guards, as usual, carried drawn swords.

We were taken to a ward-room in the Palais de Justice, and herded there like cattle. During the week we were penned up in this place, they allowed us, out of goodness of heart, to buy a little something. They, however, gave us bum soup. Some of the women, like myself, had money, so they bought coffee, which was stretched as far as it would reach, among the crowd.

The train on which we journeyed to Southern France was composed of *voitures cellulares*. They were box-cars with cells. We were stuck into little cages, where it was impossible to sit down. Some people wouldn't treat brute animals like that, but then we were only criminals. When we would

come to some jerk-water town, we were taken to the local jail and allowed to sleep in the jail-yard. There were not cells enough in such a place to accommodate us. They had to halt the caravan for rest and sleep, or some of the women would have died on their hands. When it came time to eat, the guards would chuck a hunk of bread, a piece of cheese, and a can of water into the car-cells. The train was stopped in order to feed the animals. If anyone wanted to go to the toilet, the door would be opened by the guard who stood right beside the woman occupying it. When we passed slowly through the small towns, the crowds would yell, *"voleuses," "coquins," "cochons,"* etc.

At Clairmont, we had to arrange the blue handkerchiefs over our heads, so that we looked, from the front, as if each of us had two rabbits' ears. If one hair showed, you were reported and punished. In Southern France, however, we wore white caps. At Clairmont we got only one bath a year. When you took this bath, you had to wrap a sheet all round you, and keep it round you all the time you were bathing. How they expected, if they did expect, anyone to take a bath that way, the Lord only knows. And I had been used to my daily bath with plenty of soap and water!

When we got down to Montpellier, however, things were changed. We had regular matrons instead of Sisters. The authorities had started to separate Church and State. The nuns used to make us dress and undress under blankets. If you exposed yourself, in the slightest, you were reported and punished. When the matrons were put into charge, we started to do the dressing-act in that churchly fashion. The matrons laughed, and said "Girls, dress and undress like human beings." We all felt more clubby, in consequence.

Well, I finally got through with France, somehow! It took

some money, and I had friends working for me on the outside. I was sick in the prison hospital, at Montpellier, when word came that President Emile Laubet had pardoned me. The old dear probably did not know who I was, but others did. The good doctor said it was absolutely necessary for me to have fresh air, sunshine, and proper food, or I would kick out. I got away after I had finished two years and nine months out of the five years' sentence. I was ordered deported to England.

The authorities were very decent about the red-tape connected with the deportation proceedings. They did not notify the police. Instead, they told me to go to the home of a Mlle. Garnier, in Paris, so as to avoid running the police gauntlet. Without being any the wiser, and following directions implicitly, I went to the conscientious old maid's house. I stayed with her for two days and two nights, resting and preparing for my return to London. She was some sort of a semi-official, philanthropic lady who was go-between for wronged society and criminals.

Taking me to the Gare du Nord, she took me by train to Calais. She talked to me all the way there, without ceasing, gesticulating vehemently, and preaching to me to be a good woman. It wasn't her fault, if I failed to profit by her precepts. I sure was tickled to death to get rid of her. On the train, an English boy asked me who was my companion in black. I whispered, "She's my maid." I had no cash. All of my money was in the hands of my gentle keeper. She bought me a second-class passage across the Channel, and gave me the balance. As soon as I could, I switched to first-class, glad to pay the difference, because then I would have less trouble with the customs.

My friends in England had sent me a trunk full of beauti-

ful things to wear, several months before I kicked free of France. In that country, every bit of clothing is marked with the prison-stamp. I wanted to give my flannels to the girls I left behind me, but they would not take them, and would not let me burn them up. They made me take them back to England with me, in my trunk. I could not find an opportunity to get rid of them without drawing attention to myself. The result was I did not claim my luggage at Dover, knowing the officials would search it, discover the prison-marks and wise up to the fact that I was at large. So I lost a fine trunk.

Back to my old haunts I went and recuperated. As soon as I had recovered sufficiently, I worked at the old game. The lawyers, court-costs, and prison officials had used up most of my money, and much of that of my friends. I had to raise some dough for myself and to repay my friends. As soon as this was done, I started to raise money to buy Eddie Guerin out of Devil's Island.

Up to this time, I had corresponded intermittently with my family in Ireland. The lies I told them about myself would fill a book. I am sure, however, that they were tipped off as to some of my exploits, and half guessed others. I was anxious to pay them a personal visit, but I wasn't going back to them like a prodigal son. As soon as I raised the money for Guerin, I got me extra nice fine linen and filled my purse to overflowing. Then I went home.

Many right opinions of me by my parents were shattered or badly damaged. I had my winning ways and nothing succeeds like success. They were suspicious, but kind enough not to pry too closely into my past. Wasn't I their only daughter? Had I ever asked anything of them, after stealing fifty pounds from them, which they acknowledged was

less than my share of an inheritance? I, on my part, did not inquire what they knew. We were perfectly happy together for a few weeks. Then we separated, never to see each other again. I shall never know what they knew about me, and they never knew one-tenth of the truth about me. *"Requiescat in pace."*

CHAPTER XVII

DEVIL'S ISLAND

A great deal of rot has been written about Devil's Island. This is the place from which I helped Eddie Guerin escape, after he had been sentenced, for his natural life, for his share in the American Express robbery, in Paris. When I was released for my share, and had gotten on my feet, physically and financially, I started to raise money for use in his release.

Prisoners are sprung, nine times out of ten, by bribery, and not by the wonderful cunning and persistence they are supposed to have used to escape. Very often, the alleged cleverness is merely a blind to cover a venal official.

Pat Sheedy was my main stand-by in raising the money. He, with the help of some society friends, raised fifteen thousand dollars, out of the total of fifty thousand dollars which was finally accumulated.

Guerin's Chicago relatives and friends got together something less than five thousand dollars. Baby Thompson gave me five thousand dollars to buy a little house, so that he could come to visit me in it, but that went to the Guerin fund. When I went to Cairo, Egypt, to make arrangements about the money, I nicked a man for five thousand dollars, and that went to the good cause. I stole a wad of money from Martin Walsh, an Australian, and was arrested. When I told him why I was so hungry for money, he would not

press the charge, paid the lawyers, bought a dinner, and gave me a check for two hundred pounds. I gave twenty-five hundred dollars out of my general funds.

And so the money was raised. We even accepted contributions as low as one hundred dollars; but we had to draw the line, for we could not be bothered keeping books. Many people gave many different amounts, to make up the grand total, thus showing the free-masonry of crookdom.

Eddie did not escape from the Island itself, as has been said. It is one of the three Iles du Salut, or Safety Islands, twenty-five miles from the mainland. Only the prisoners who turn out to be intractable and violent are kept there, though Dreyfus was kept there until released in 1899.

It has been said that a dugout was either built on the islands or smuggled there for the prisoner to escape. That is not so. It is virtually beyond human possibility to escape from the island where the prison is built. Cruisers, sharks, and lack of cover would prevent that.

The main penal settlement is on the mainland, at Cayenne, the capital of French Guiana. It was from there that the escape was made.

Guerin had sense enough to immediately go on his good behavior, and make himself agreeable and useful. As a result of this, and through a judicious use of the large amount of money we had smuggled in to him, he was soon transferred to the mainland.

The rest of the money was used for working on officials, both in France and in the colony.

The area of French Guiana is greater than that of the State of Pennsylvania, but the total population is barely thirty thousand. Nearly half of the people live in Cayenne; and half of these are members of the penal settlement. The

city itself has an Indian population of nearly two thousand.

Mangroves and palms abound along the coast, some spots running back many miles. The principal products are rice, yams, and bananas.

There was no enclosed prison. The settlement is made up of convicts or children of convicts. There is little fear that anyone will try to escape, because the surrounding country is nearly impassable. Aside from the natural difficulties, there are wild beasts and wild natives.

Guerin was working in the tailor shop on the second floor of a building, under little surveillance. He dropped some of his work out of the window, and went down into the street to get it. Then he walked away.

Unfortunately, two other men got on to this scheme; and he had to accept their company, under threat of exposure. What he and the others suffered in making the escape is beyond description. Eddie alone survived of the three. He has written about it; others have written about it; and he has told me about it. Here is what he told me:

They started late one afternoon, walking inland to avoid the marshes and dense vegetation which fringed the shore. After they had got back to the hills, which were not very high, they set a course almost due west for British Guiana. They wanted to get to Georgetown. To do so, they had to first traverse Surinam, or Dutch Guiana.

The population was sparse and savage; the trees and vegetation were thick; and the rain was torrential. They did not suffer much from the heat, though they were only three hundred and seventy-five miles north of the equator. They did, however, suffer from the humidity.

When the party got to the Maroni River, which is the di-

viding line between French and Dutch Guiana, they found the stream so swollen that it was impassable. They had to beg, borrow or steal something by which they could float across. Crocodiles forbade the thought of swimming. Luck was with them. They bought a canoe or dugout from some friendly natives.

The Maroni was running wild, so the party decided to go with the current, which carried them almost due north to the Dutch town of Albina, on the left bank. Here they struck out due west again, crossing innumerable rivers, going through dense forests and meeting hostile peoples.

What is true and what is imaginary in Guerin's story about his adventures with the natives, I know not. He must have suffered terribly, and perhaps his mind became warped.

He told me about an Indian funeral, where he had to menace his two companions for getting fresh with some of the tribal girls; and how he saved the party by showing his respect and taking his hat off during the ceremonies.

Then he said he heard the Frenchmen talking in Italian, plotting to kill him, and steal his money. His story went on to say that one of his companions committed suicide by jumping to the alligators in one of the rivers. The other, he said, went mad, climbed a tree, and was last seen crouching on a branch with a jaguar waiting below.

The stories, however, are so conflicting that it would not surprise me to learn that Guerin killed the two men, either in a fight, or when they were off guard. I wouldn't blame him for it. They forced their company on him, and they were a menace to his safety.

The story goes on that Eddie was captured by negroes, after the death of the Frenchmen. They robbed him of everything he had, except his rags and a razor. Then he

shaved the head of an Indian Chief, who thought so much of the razor that it had to be given to him as a present. A Chinaman was good-hearted enough to give the fugitive food and shelter.

Dutch Guiana was finally crossed, and Guerin got into more civilized country. He ran across a Scotchman, at a place called Alliance Farm. This man was inclined to turn an honest penny by delivering up the convict and claiming a reward. Maybe he was only kidding.

Anyhow, Guerin must have looked so pitiful, and told such a hard-luck story, that he was passed on to Georgetown. Here the American Consul got the poor fellow passage for the United States. He claimed, then, that he was an American citizen.

Various people, no doubt, had been promised money for helping Guerin. He had none left to give them. Everybody was liable to get into trouble for helping a French prisoner escape.

The wanderer landed in Charleston and beat his way to New York. When he came into Considine's place, he was ragged and filthy and looked like a living skeleton.

Paddy Guerin, the brother, was living in New York at the time. He has since been shot and killed, and he well deserved it. He was a crook and stool-pigeon. The boys gave Eddie some money, got him some clothes and smuggled him into the old Lincoln Hotel, where his brother lived. He then made tracks for Chicago. But there were two warring political factions in Illinois at the time. The authorities did not want the escaped prisoner on their hands, so Eddie had to sneak back to England. There he was discovered by the police, for which I was blamed, as I explained elsewhere.

Gus Miller was also sent to Devil's Island for his share

in the American Express robbery. He and Guerin were kept at the Ile de Ray for a year before the convict-ship sailed. When they got to their destination, Eddie felt like killing Gus for squealing, but concluded that life-imprisonment, there, would be far worse punishment than death.

The poor fellow was scarcely twenty-eight years old. He was only a pennyweighter and should not have been put to work on a safe-job. He took Old George's place, who knew his business and who was let out on account of a fight with Guerin.

Another, and different, sort of a man down in that French hell-hole, if he is still alive, is Tom Gilmore. He was an Australian sheep farmer, who went broke living the gay night-life in Paris. One evening he met the procurer of a then popular actress. The two of them arranged to get the lady's jewels, and Gilmore hid in her closet. When the right time arrived, Gilmore grabbed the big, husky dame, who put up a fight and screamed her head off. He was soft-hearted, and just tussled with her, so as not to hurt her, instead of knocking her out.

My lawyer defended Gilmore, and told me the actress had only a little scratch on her nose, and it was a shame to send the poor fellow away on such a sentence. But Gilmore was broke. He had no money or friends; his story was not believed, and he was a foreigner. Guerin said this far-from-desperate character accepted his lot with philosophy at Devil's Island, and was always reading his Bible.

Tom O'Brien was a famous Irish-American, who died on the island. He did not have the low-down cunning of Guerin, but fought those Frenchmen at every turn, and made several unsuccessful attempts to escape. The most spectacular try was that of Lucy McCarthy, owner of The House of All

Nations, in 46th Street, New York. She chartered a yacht, and organized an expedition to rescue O'Brien. The lady spent a fortune trying different schemes, but was unsuccessful in all of them.

She did not know the right way to go about freeing a criminal, and O'Brien was too much of a hard-boiled egg to make him a good subject for freedom-stunts. The French government captured and confiscated the yacht, but let the lady go back to the States.

O'Brien had been convicted of shooting Kid Twadell in Paris, in a drunken brawl. He died in an iron cage. His keepers could have shot him down for insubordination, attempts to escape and dozens of other things. The French are very refined in their cruelty.

CHAPTER XVIII

DOPE

After I had recovered from the shock of my French experience of prisons, and had gotten together considerable dough, my friends said I owed them a swell banquet, out of gratitude for my deliverance, and the backing-up I had received from the gang. I thought so myself, and had had it in my mind, before they mentioned it. A committee was formed; and I thought it would be the regular eating and drinking kind of an affair. But the committee was unanimously in favor of a dope party. I was in the hands of my friends, though I disapproved of it.

Accordingly, the orgy was held. I am not sure about dates; but I think this feast of wit, wisdom, and dreams was pulled off some time in 1904. I had a house, at the time, in Montague Place. The party was held opposite the British Museum.

I went down to Limehouse Causeway, and engaged the services of a high-class chef, to cook the pills. Then I ordered plenty of morphine, heroin, and cocaine. You may be sure I did not neglect getting another kind of chef, with plenty of good things to eat and drink. I, at least, was going to have a good time in my own way. The list was made up of all the crooks, dopes, or otherwise, that the committee and myself could think of.

And maybe we didn't have a crowd! There must have

been more than a hundred there. No bums! Just a crowd of men and women who would compare favorably with any function in polite society, either as to dress, looks or manners. There was Polly Carr, the swan-neck beauty; Bromogan Liz; Jennie, the Pick; Dopey Sallie; Pretty Bessie, the American beauty, operating, then, in London; my old friend, Annie Gleason; the beautiful Ada Bernard, who was playing in London at the time; many of the stage girls; and others too numerous or too dangerous to set forth, here.

There is no doubt we began by having plenty of fun. Then things got to be hilarious, what with speeches, toasts, and boisterous conversation. When I had had my fill of eating and drinking, and the rest were getting to the drowsy, or fighting, stage, Baby Thompson, my admirer, asked me to leave with him for a drive. We did so, very fortunately.

On my return home, I learned that my party had been raided by the police. They arrested my housekeeper, Skinner, and she took the fall. The law in England, at that time, allowed one to smoke for pleasure, as long as one did not sell.

Nine out of every ten crooks are drug-addicts. They snuff it and smoke it and use the needle, for the most part. Why they, as a class, get this way, I do not know. Perhaps, it is because they are under a nervous strain, when they are working, and have too much idle time, between jobs. When they have nothing to do, honest people are too busy to make company for them.

I have never become a drug-addict, though I have tried all of it, and taken it in every way, as part of my education. The reason is that I did not like the taste or smell

of the stuff. It made me sick, at times. Then, too, I always had nerve enough that was real, without requiring false courage. Also, I was a hard drinker, when I drank, though I never drank by myself, and only drank at long intervals. The drinker does not take dope, generally, and vice versa. Doctors will have to explain the reason for this. I don't know.

Drug-addicts are easily lured into crime, because their will-power is so weakened that they lose all sense of moral differentiation.

Poor Billie Carleton, whose death was a "mystery," really committed suicide because she knew she had come to the end of her stage career. Drugs had destroyed her beauty and her nerves. The Honorable Gwinneth Erica Morgan was a hopeless dope-fiend. One night, she went to London's Chinatown, and took an overdose, which proved fatal. Later, her body was found floating in the Thames. This also was a "mystery." But we knew!

With such horrible examples all around me I made up my mind that I wouldn't try the stuff long enough to acquire the habit! I was afraid of it.

I was in San Francisco when I was a kid, long before the earthquake. At that time I was piloted by Scar-Face Stella. I was on an expedition from Chicago. It was not until years later, I think it was in 1923, that I visited the place again.

While there, then, I did some work, stopped at the St. Francis Hotel, and visited Chinatown. I hardly knew the city, it had changed so. Frisco Blackie was my mentor on this occasion. The dope joints were pretty much the same, unless, possibly, some were cleaner and more elaborate: Front entrances, shops, dark passages, men making Chinese

sandals, and other things, men packing American-marked tea into Chinese-marked packages; the dormitories, several with a tray between them, some cooking their own, others having it cooked by a Chink, etc.

The baby I was with got a private room and cooked for us. He cooked green pills for me, and I nearly passed out. I was fed up with dope, and I have never inhaled opium in any form since.

The last time I visited San Francisco, one could still smoke, only Chinatown was changed still more. They were more careful. On that occasion, I was introduced to a Chinaman who said he lived in Dolores Street. He owned a place in the new Chinatown. This Chink had a white mother. His father had married a white-slave.

His game was to single out pretty, likely-looking young women visitors, describe the heavenly dreams, etc., and promise to show the way, and how, at a future visit. I was told many girls were tempted in this crude way. In Philadelphia, East is West in this respect, as I know from my own experience.

But America is not the only place where there are opium joints, as I have already intimated. When I lived in Paris, an American, Maurice Maloney, pal of Eddie Guerin, lived in Rue St. Denis. His wife was the notorious Baby Ruth, an American mulatto. They had a private hop joint in Paris. The lady who looked after the place, and "cooked," had been the wife of a high official in China. Maurice's lay was to get his friends to steer Americans, who wanted to smoke, to his place.

Then there was Chang's hang-out, in Limehouse Causeway, London. His wife, an English woman, ran the little tea store in the front. Chang was always on call, to go to

Americans with "toys" of hop, ready to "cook," if desired by his patrons.

Dopes, sniffers, or otherwise, are easy to make stool-pigeons of. I know of no case where a Federal officer has done so; but I do know of cases where local cops have made a stool of a man by handing him dope when he was badly in need of it. This is especially the case when a man is on parole, has a job, and wants to go straight.

There is nothing easier than to threaten to tell, and nothing easier than to actually tell the employer, and have the man given the air, if he does not bend as desired. Again, perhaps, the dope slips of his own accord, and the dick gets wise. That club brings many unwillingly to become pigeons. Dope-fiends and panhandlers, as stool-pigeons, are among the biggest assets the police have in ferreting out crime.

The term dope includes, I suppose, the use of chloral but that is only given to the Johns, mostly by the ladies in my former profession. Crooks do not take it, knowingly, themselves. They are afraid of it, and with good cause.

Dope-running, like rum-running in America, is a distinct branch of the crook's business. I know little about it, personally, though I have been asked to take it up. It is too tough for me. The profits are high; but the runner has to take a long chance. That is always the way. The danger of, and penalty for, being caught is in direct proportion to the profits. Fines and hush money are enormous, compared with other forms of vice.

The peddler, on the other hand, or seller, does not have to take such chances. Dope is more compact than liquor. Therefore, it can be handled more easily. The seller lives in one place, and has more friends to help him, in case of a pinch, than the runner has. Dope is even passed to

people in jail, in spite of censorship of the mail, under the gummed postage-stamp and the gummed tab.

It is easier to pass dope than it is to pass tobacco. If the authorities would allow the latter, it would help to keep down the craving for the former. In fact, I have known dope-addiction to be started in prisons, where the authorities forbade tobacco.

Narcotic fiends get so bold, they lose their sense of caution. This, I suppose, is an offset for what they do by reason of their artificial courage, and enables them to be caught more easily. This courage, however, is not foolhardy, daring, and insane, as is commonly supposed.

I had an experience with a dope-fiend booster (shoplifter) in Philadelphia. I never want another like it. We were out together shopping. I had no idea of working. The first thing I knew, she had lifted a whole bolt of silk, and dropped it into a long inside pocket of her coat.

I was ready to sink, at the audacity of the thing. Anybody knows there is no give to such a package. It almost cries out loud. She might just as well have stolen an unabridged dictionary.

I did not want to be yellow and run, so I played interference for her. We got on a street-car, and blessed if she wasn't going to sit down beside a harness bull, with her game side next to him. I hurried up and squeezed in between the two of them, and probably saved the day.

The creature took the loot to a fence, at 11th and Green Streets, got eight dollars, and bought some more dope. She didn't even know she had the courage of a careless fool. When I remonstrated with her, and explained she only laughed. I had been differently trained, where I went to school.

The women cokeys illustrate their lack of professional etiquette in this way, which hurts me personally. Without exception, it was this branch of the sisterhood, which used my name, Chicago May. Not that I cared much, as already stated, because the use of my name was flattering, rather than otherwise. But how about hurting me with the police and adding to an otherwise too voluminous official record? I admit I have been bad; but there is no use in rubbing it in. Crooks, like honest people, hate to be unjustly accused.

CHAPTER XIX

SOUTH AMERICAN TRIP

In the Summer of 1905, Eddie Guerin's threats against me and my current friend, Baby Thompson, had become so menacing that the English crook got frightened and advised me to take a vacation to South America. He gave me five hundred dollars and bought me beautiful clothes for the trip.

I went down on the Royal Mail steamer, and no one on board was as well dressed as I was. In order to relieve the monotony of the voyage, I gave a birthday party, though I didn't have a birthday anywhere near that time of the year. It cost me plenty for wine, tips, etc., but I certainly got a great kick out of the rockets and fireworks. We were dancing and singing all night. In due time, we arrived at Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Ships do not dock at the city, but are met by tenders, which transfer passengers and freight. On our tender, a young Englishman shot himself in the arm, and continued to live. That is all the excitement we had. A cab strike was in progress, so many of us loitered round the docks, not knowing exactly how to handle ourselves.

But I had become friendly with a young Italian, a salesman for a machinery firm, in the Calle de Peru. He 'phoned the concern, and they sent a truck, and the boss's private

car, for us and our luggage. I checked into the Hotel de France. I stayed in the city for a while, visiting the sportsmen, and driving out to Los Palmos, daily.

Among others, I met a young Austrian, a white-slave dealer. He had no designs on me, because such herders only deal in young girls, thirteen to eighteen. The latter age is, generally, too old. As I knew nothing about this side of life, I was interested, and got him to take me to one of the slave-houses.

All such places pay a large tax to the Argentine government. The inmates were mostly foreign-born, beautiful Poles, Germans, Russians, and a sprinkling of Swedes. There were no Latins. The girls were as fair as lilies, and beautifully built. They appeared to be perfectly happy, and were well fed.

After a year's training, the slaves were allowed to have lovers. The landlady would give them back their liberty, when they paid her the amount paid by her to the slaver, and a bonus, for keep and education. Sometimes a rich rancher would buy a girl outright and pay her mistress twice as much as would have been charged the girl, herself, for freedom.

The madam is glad to sell out promptly; because, when a girl becomes eighteen, she is soon passé. Those Argentineans certainly like them young! If a young girl is going to lead such a life, she is much better off in a slave-house than running the streets. In such joints, they have a house-doctor, and every man is examined before he gets into the interior of the place. There are outside courts, with palms and benches and beautifully colored lights. Everybody knows where, and what, the brothels are. They are not hypocrites, in this respect at least, in Buenos Aires. Which would you

prefer to be, if you had to take your choice—a canary, or a sparrow?

As I was only able to pull one big deal, and had so much trouble and ceremony about it, I decided to try Brazil. I bought a first-class for Rio de Janeiro, via the S. S. Orissa, of the Pacific Navigation Line. First, I went over in a small boat to Montevideo, Uruguay, but I had some annoyance because a young Paraguayan kept following me. When I spoke to the steward about it, I was told he was a nut who had a penchant for annoying strange women in that way, if they did not have an escort.

I was somewhat worried, after we had docked, when I found the Yahoo ogling me worse than ever. Having observed that an Irishman, and his wife and daughter, judging by their baggage-marks, were going on the Orissa, back to the old country, I asked the man if I might join his party. He snubbed me roughly, and accused me of talking Spanish to a man, in Buenos Aires the day before, though I explained I was talking French to one who wasn't a native.

The hotel, which looked after the ship passengers, sent its carriages. All my heavy baggage was on the big boat; and I had only a hand-bag. I went, with the others, to the Oriental Hotel, where we had to wait till evening. I kept to myself; but the Paraguayan was still on my trail. The manager, a very courteous Spaniard, who spoke French and English, kicked my admirer out, when I told him the gink had followed me from Buenos Aires.

We got very friendly. The passengers, first and second, went into the public dining room and were waiting to be served. A room, adjoining, was reserved for the officers and distinguished passengers. Their tables were decorated with flowers, and they drank basketed Chianti. The others had

ordinary bottles of table-wine. The Spaniard introduced me to the private room, and I had a special waiter.

This big boss sat down and talked to me. In the course of conversation, I told him about the Irishman, and how he had refused to protect me, he and his Argentinean wife and daughter. Soon the Irishman beckoned the manager, and demanded, in a loud voice, in Spanish, that they have a private room since a hussy like me had one. It was explained to the enraged dubs that I was a lady, a relative of one of the ship owners, and had made a reservation.

A page-boy took me round to show me the beautiful views of Montevideo. When I came back, I struck up an acquaintanceship with the lady-manager, a lovely young French woman. She could not understand why I should give up the comforts of London, Paris, and New York to live in Brazil and frizzle. I told her my husband had run away from me, and I was going up to Diamantina, Feresas, to try to find him. She said no man was worth that much trouble.

"Why," said she, "I can find you a lover, right here in the house, who is sailing on your boat to-night for Rio."

She was as good as her word, and trotted out a bow-legged little Englishman, answering to the unimaginative name of Perkins. He came from Liverpool, and owned some of the ships which carry frozen mutton from the Argentine to England. Mr. Perkins was no Valentino, but he sure spent money like water on that trip to Rio.

I did not see much of the rude Irishman and his family, because they traveled second-class. I saw them once when the first-officer showed me over the ship; but I only gave them the stony stare. I did enjoy the trip and hated to debark.

My friend Perkins gave me a thousand dollars in English

money when I pitched him the deserted-lady tale. I had no opportunity of stealing from him, because he kept his dough in the ship-safe. There was a young Portuguese on board, going to Lisbon with his uncle, a little chap, so frail and delicate I never paid any heed to him. I was kept busy with my Englishman.

The young chap asked my friend Perkins to introduce him to me. I got the surprise of my life when I found out he was an officer in the Brazilian Navy, and had performed some heroic deed or other. Everybody treated him with great respect.

When we got to Rio de Janeiro, I put up at the Hôtel des Etrangers. The Portuguese officer called on me, and took me out that night, and had me made a member of a very high-class club, where gambling was carried on extensively. It was known, then, as the Democratic Club. This poor, dying-looking officer had to be told I was hard up. I did not have the heart to steal from him. He was very generous with me, showed me the swell resorts and sailed for Lisbon. I never saw him again.

No time was lost by me in following up the advantage I had gained by the entrée to the swell club. I had a chance to display my real-lace gowns. Even the French girls had nothing on me. In Rio they were six months behind the fashions, unless a theatrical troupe came on the scene. But, at that, the well-dressed, good French actresses did not come to Brazil.

I met a French girl, named Lucien, who was the mistress of an embassy secretary. She made me acquainted with other French girls, a gay, laughing, joy-loving bunch. We used to ride out on the street cars to Lemee, the seashore resort. One warm evening (it appeared to be always Sum-

mer, there), a young journalist was on the car. The girls started kidding him, and told him they had a nice fresh girl from England, not yet dried up by the heat, who loved Mackacks (monkeys, Brazilians).

He said, "Girls, do be serious for once. Has this girl a friend?"

When they shouted, "No," he turned to me; and, in very broken English, asked me to please accompany him to the Bota Foga (Flower Garden), because he wanted to introduce me to a compatriot. I was always looking for new adventures, so I consented and got off the tram with him. He took me to a beautiful garden, with tables and chairs scattered among the trees and flowers. I was piloted to a table where I met an old gentleman with hair as white as snow, and was introduced to him. He jumped to his feet and bowed with a low and courtly sweep of his head. After several drinks, our newspaper friend left us alone together.

By this time, I had moved from the hotel to a theatrical *pension*. I invited my new friend, a Mr. Billings, known as Papa Billings in Rio, to go with me there. He had been in the country forty years, was president of a large company and he had high political connections.

When we arrived at my boarding house, it turned out that the landlady was an old sweetheart of my new-found friend. She was a native Brazilian, and must have been a beauty in her day, when he was a boy fresh from England. Each married somebody else. You should have seen the meeting. Both cried.

Anyhow, the old roué treated all the girls in the house, mostly show girls at the Casino. He announced to all and sundry that he would be responsible for my bills while I

remained in the country. I had told him I was in a hurry to sail home.

Believe me, I showed Papa how to live. I had a charge account at Crashley's English store, in Rue des Ouvidors. We wanted for nothing. I ordered imported wines, liquors, and preserves. Swell Americans and English were soon dancing attendance on me. I could afford to be, and was, liberal, as a hostess. Although I dislike the English, as a nation, I must say they are good losers, and soft-hearted. I have pulled a lot of shekels out of them, in different parts of the world, by giving them a hard-luck story.

Billings gave me plenty of money. I went gambling nightly at the club, never losing my own. The suckers always gave me money to play with.

While I was batting round Rio, I lost a fortune from soft-heartedness and for lack of a place and opportunity to plant it. I had met an American faker, named Shaw, and an Oxford boy, named Morris. The Englishman was a good sport. He burned up Rio while he was there. On a Fourth of July, we were all at the Casino, and the girls on the stage were playing to our box. He loaded the girls with flowers and wine. His partner, the lanky Yankee, met me the next day, at the Hôtel des Etrangers, and proposed that I join them and go up with them to the diamond mines, where they worked, near Diamantina.

They were to get me a job at a big salary, checking; and I was to hide a stone every once in a while. The prospect didn't look too good to me, and the thoughts of mule-back traveling, mosquitoes, yellow fever, and lack of conveniences were not so alluring. I turned the job down. I stole nothing from Morris. He lavished all his money on me, and had to borrow money to go back to work.

For weeks, I got love-letters from my generous Oxford boy, who had been kicked out of college for some prank or other. One night, a handsome American boy, from Salt Lake City, came bounding up the steps of the *pension*. He had told the page-boy he wanted to see "May Williams, the finest girl in Rio." This was Greek to that little Brazilian. One of the French girls, however, got the news and steered the young man to my room. She told me there was a mad *Anglais* outside.

After he had introduced himself, the Yankee told me he was a friend of Morris; that he did not want to hurt my feelings; that he had had such fine reports of me as a good-scout; that—in short, he wanted me to take care of him, because he had a fortune in English money on him and was sailing the next day.

I nearly collapsed. Here was a fat bird, ready to be plucked. He said he was dog-tired and did not want to meet any other girls or have a party. As a matter of fact, most of the girls in the house would have been at work in the theater.

My young man gave me money to treat the house. He wanted to know why I was in a "Hell-hole like Rio." I handed him the story about a man having lured me away from my husband and deserted me, far, far away from home. He was sorry and gave me a hundred pounds, in ten-pound notes, to put me on my feet. The dear soul even suggested taking me to England with him, because he was going to Ireland to see his father's relatives, on his way home—to "God's country," as he called it so very tenderly.

There was no doubt I could easily rob this baby. But did I want to rob him? What would I do with the money?

I had so little heart for the job, he being so decent, that I actually began to argue myself out of it. I had no confederates near, to point suspicion away from me; all my immediate friends were legit; the Leopold-Dean Railroad was the only one out to Sao Paulo and the trains were infrequent and traveling strangers would be spotted; I would have to take a small boat to meet a ship, and would be a walking advertisement of myself; and so forth and so on.

Anyhow, I fixed my guest up for the night. He no sooner hit the hay than he was dead to the world, what between natural tiredness and liquor. I was thinking, thinking. He had played square with me. Off I went, with an employee of the Cabo Submarino, to a night-club and made a night of it—as usual. I was thinking.

When I came back to my room, there was my baby, still sound asleep, dreaming, no doubt, of his mother in America, his head off the pillow, out of which stuck a sheaf of bank notes, hidden for security. I stood over him. Shall I take a chance! Yes, I would, but not much. Four fifty-pound notes were enough. I put them into the bottom of a box of chocolates. He ought to be taught his A. B. C.'s, anyhow.

When the time came, I woke the poor Yankee. He jumped up, said he had something to attend to before sailing, pulled his dough out of the pillow, pinned most of it into his inside coat-pocket, without counting it, and put some into a long envelope with his steamer ticket. Then he pulled a handful of sovereigns out of his trousers, thanked me for taking care of him, and handed me five of them for "souvenirs."

I never saw or learned of him again. He had only heard

the crazy Morris raving about me being a good fellow. I reproached myself for not taking more of the infant's wad and giving him an advanced primary lesson. It doesn't do to be too chicken-hearted when you are a crook.

CHAPTER XX

THE LOW-DOWN ON RIO

I did not know who Sidney Hamilton Gore really was when I was introduced to him. He was companionable, however, so I was willing to go along. We had some conversation and drinks, and then we went out together to another night-club. Here we had more conversation and drinks. I was getting better acquainted with my companion. My liking for him increased with knowledge of him. It was morning before he escorted me to my home, and then left for Nietheroy, across the bay from Rio. There was a big club-house there where the unmarried English boys could live and be away from the girls.

Sidney met me the next evening at a restaurant, known as the Palms. He confessed that he could feel me looking at him, the night before, and that something dark passed over his eyes. He got up and followed me until he saw Cruikshank, a young bank clerk friend and me together, and had been introduced. I told him it was a warning; but he only laughed.

There have been some stories in daily newspapers and magazines to the effect that I robbed young Gore. It is a lie. I never took a cent from him. I had plenty of money at the time. Sometimes, at the gambling-table, he would have a heap of gold, and would put a handful into my hand-bag. I always gave it back to him; and he would call me his banker.

We got very intimate and he took me everywhere with him, in the best society and otherwise. He was the foremost Englishman in Brazilian society, and was treated accordingly; but little he cared for form, ceremony, or convention. This is well illustrated by his conduct at the state ball in honor of the Pan-American Conference, in 1906.

The U. S. S. Charleston had arrived for the ceremonies, and brought the American officials, including Elihu Root. The Brazilian government built a special meeting-place for the occasion. It was fitted out with a garden, which was illuminated at night by many electric lights. The surroundings made the place look beautiful.

How well I remember that seductive, tropical night, the flowers and music! And how our names were called out—mine linked with Gore's. The eyebrows of the wife of the American Ambassador went up in the air when we took precedence of her crowd. I noticed that the real ladies among the British guests did not bat an eyelash, though they had the same eye and ear-full.

I don't want to throw bouquets at myself, but I knew and the papers said, the next morning, that I was the best-gowned woman at the show. What is more, I had life, strength and vigor, which few women have in the warm climate of the big South American republic. These attributes were some of the reasons why the virile Sir Sidney was so fond of me. He was that kind himself.

As we became better and better acquainted, my nobleman wanted me to go with him to Central America and get married. He said he had some business friends there, and we could settle down. I told him, very frankly, that I was married, and did not know whether or not my hus-

band was alive. I would either have to prove his death or divorce him before there could be a valid marriage. He wanted to take a chance, willy-nilly, but I refused. This seemed to make him more anxious than ever to marry me.

One night, the two of us were in a restaurant. We had been drinking all afternoon. He got hold of a London paper, I think it was the News of the World, and gave it to me. The sheet showed Eddie Guerin in a cage, with the caption, "The Fate Which Awaits Guerin If The British Court Decides Against Him." The other picture showed me running off with a bag-full of money. The head-lines of this yellow journal read, "Betrayed By A Woman."

People born in temperate or cold climates cannot drink with safety near the tropics. I flew into a terrible rage when I saw that I had been accused, unjustly, of betraying Guerin. It nearly drove me mad to think I was in that far-off country unable to defend myself. Anyhow, I forgot, and betrayed myself to my lover. I told him everything. Generous man that he was, and gentleman, he never mentioned the subject to me again, and never hinted at it. He seemed to drink more than usual, however, and he went wild at gambling.

I have been blamed for Gore's death; but that, also, is a lie. The poor fellow was driven to suicide by circumstances over which neither of us had any control. He did not lack for money, social position, or companionship. He thoroughly enjoyed his life; but it irked him to think he could not have everything he wanted. He wanted to marry me at once. Both of us were willing, but Fate compelled us to wait until things could be arranged. He was willing to face ignominy and ostracism on account of me, but I told him to wait, both for his own sake and mine. In time, we could

have lived down everything, but we had to set the stage first. His position and the abilities of both of us would have won in the long run.

This can be illustrated by what happened the afternoon before the night he killed himself. We had been out together several hours. A native officer spoke to me and he resented it very much. It was in a café in the Rue des Ouvidors. It took me some time to pacify him. Then we walked together to where I lived. He asked me out to supper before we parted. I refused, and told him he ought to go home and take a sleep. He said, "Nobody cares about me but Boozer" (his dog). I laughed, and said, "Oh yes, somebody does." He replied, "I know you do, but you can't help much now." He turned away and that was the last I saw or heard of him in this world.

That night about 11 o'clock, the poor fellow shot himself through the head with a shotgun. The barking of the dog attracted the man in the next room. The fellows grabbed up his correspondence, so that there might be no publicity or scandal. He was well connected. The old Earl of Arran was his uncle; and he was a near relative of the Charles Gore who was then Bishop of Birmingham and later of Oxford.

But even in death, Fate was unkind to this unusual soul. The stiff-necked officials would not allow his remains to be buried in consecrated ground in the English cemetery. He was interred somewhere in the Avenada, near Lloyd's Brazilian steamship offices, just outside the fence. Only a few of the boys attended the funeral of this man, who had spent and lent his money so generously among his friends!

After the suicide, I was very much upset. Most of the

Englishmen cut me. There had been a great deal of jealousy of me, in Rio, on the part of the ladies, because Sidney insisted upon taking me to the football games and tennis parties among the nicest, primmest people. As a matter of fact, nobody had anything on me, and Daddy Billings kept still for his own sake. I tried to be gay and not show how badly I felt. Old Daddy still stuck. He was a friend of the deceased, and knew exactly how matters stood between us.

One night I went out with a rich Portuguese. He bought jewelry and a cut-glass bottle of perfume. Then we drove to my house in his car. There was a court leading into the sitting room. This brute picked me up, threw me down, and tried to attack me. I was horrified, because I was not used to being treated that way by the men of the set in which I traveled. I begged him, in broken Portuguese, to let me up, because he was tearing my dress.

He gave way enough for me to get to my feet. The first thing I could lay my hands on was the cut-glass bottle of perfume, and I let him have it over the head. He bled like a pig and the blood spurted out over both of us. The coward started to yell murder. Up came a guard, and both of us were dragged to the police station.

Here I met a Spaniard, Lieutenant Ottero, who spoke English, and said he was born in Madrid. The Brazilians do not have any too much love for the Portuguese, so I got some sympathy as against the brute I had cracked on the cocoanut. The officer expressed sorrow that he could not get me better quarters that first night, so I sat on a stone in the lockup, past which a small stream flowed.

As I was the first woman ever locked up there, the guards kept looking in at me all night. I had no privacy. The warm,

foggy dampness was terrible. It turned out I was being held for a shake-down.

The next morning the Chief Delegate ordered me breakfast, and told me not to post cash for bail or I would not see it again. It was arranged for me to have a room to myself. One of the guards gave me his.

The jailer's girl, a Polack from an adjoining brothel, brought me clean sheets and some warm milk. As neither of us spoke the other's language, we had to just let it go at shaking hands and smiling. Her kindness was a great comfort. Next came along a Brazilian officer, who promised to get me out by a writ of habeas corpus. The Spanish lieutenant found this out and got peeved.

Anyhow, I was taken to the Detentione, and I got a clean room with a colored girl to wait on me. With the aid of a little money, I was able to get rice, chicken, fruit, and wine. They even apologized for being short of vegetables. That was some jail! Jacob Burke, the cook, was born in New York, and was in jail because he had wounded a sailor in a drunken row in Rio.

I knew the American Consul could not get me out, so I waited for my friend, the Brazilian officer, to spring me, which he did in a few days. If he had not done so, I would have been out in a few more days, anyhow, because another friend of mine, Edmund Bethincourt, editor of the Corrio de Manha, had just heard about my fix, and was arranging to come to my rescue.

After I got my liberty, I moved from the sporting district and took a room across from the president's palace. I loved to watch the equerry and the out-riders, driving back and forward like mad.

Then I fell sick with malaria, thanks to my damp night

in the lock-up. The American boys and some of the English stuck by me. One Scotchman, a deacon of the English Church, knew all about me, but visited me every day.

When I got well, I beat it to Sao Paulo, the great business center of Brazil, where the inhabitants are European in their ways, and where there is a large sprinkling of Germans. Here I ran into a big four-flushing American, who was connected with the light-and-power company.

I wouldn't have robbed him only he tried to make a fool out of me in front of a lot of people in a road-house where he had taken me by force, partially dressed. He must have promised the crowd some fun at my expense, the way they acted. He started to drink heavily and I started to follow suit; only I kept watering a plant with the better part of my drinks.

When most of the party were drunk and I was supposed to have passed out, I waited for the sober ones to go to their rooms. Then I robbed all the drunks, men and women. Although I had collected only a thousand dollars, it was in millereis and bulky.

A man from Rosario, of Irish descent, came along and saw my plight. He guessed what I had been up against, and what I had been up to. I told him the truth. He put me into his car and drove me home, helped me pack, and took me to the railroad station, so that I could get out on the first train for Santos. He wanted me to go home with him to Argentine, but I refused. When I offered him a century to pay him for his trouble, he became insulted.

I could not get a boat for England, so I took passage on the Prince Sigmund, a German ship going to Hamburg, via Dover. It was important for me to get under way promptly, because I did not know but what there was a hue and cry,

as a result of my last exploit. Anyhow, I was anxious to get back to vindicate myself among my friends and face my enemies.

If only I had never gone back to England! I would have been spared an enormous amount of suffering and anguish. Fortune was beginning to turn her face away from me. But how was I to know that?

CHAPTER XXI

OCEAN TRIPS

I have crossed the Atlantic Ocean fifteen times; once for pleasure, when I ran away from home; once because I had to make the voyage, when I was deported from England and traveled through submarine lanes; and thirteen times when I was on business bent, enjoying myself as a side issue. If I had taken a couple more business trips, I might have avoided the thirteen-curse. On all but my first trip, I traveled first-class. To do so is to get a standing with those in authority, which helps if you are a crook.

I have told about my trip to South America, and my "birthday" party. Perhaps, it will be interesting to give details of some of my other trips.

After I failed in my attempt to rob an investigator for the New York World, I cleared off for London. I packed up my things in a hurry, at a theatrical hotel, 38th Street and 7th Avenue, where I was living at the time, kissed my sweetie, Harry, the newspaper man, good-by, and embarked. Wasn't I surprised, and annoyed, when I found Harry traveling on the same boat! He had thrown a few things into a grip and sneaked on board. Before we were out of sight of land, I discovered my man among the second-cabin passengers. He didn't have enough money to sail first-class. For punishment, I high-hatted him several days.

Among the distinguished passengers, was an American Ambassador and his suite, bound for Paris. I don't recall, but I think he was making a special trip to arrange for the government to get the body of Paul Jones and bury it in the United States. In his party, was a man I knew very well, Charles Alvin Gillig, who kept the American rendezvous in London, in Pall Mall. I don't mean anything wrong by this. His place was a convenient headquarters for Yankee travelers who wanted information and advice about hotels, addresses, people, itineraries, etc. They got their mail there, too.

Gillig introduced me to the Honorable Horace Porter and to a rich Southern widow. I was groomed as well as, if not better than, any of the crowd. In a short while, I was asked to make one of the party, and, as luck would have it, I fell to the Ambassador as his partner. Gillig had his girl to meet in London, so he paired up with the widow, who was going to meet a Colonel Breckenridge. Late one night, I crept over, among the second-class passengers, got hold of my sweetheart, and told him the lay-out.

He got excited right away, for he had a keen nose for news, and said, "Oh, what a story. I will follow you on to Paris. I know you will raise hell, when you get there." He gave me advice, how to act, what to say, and so on.

Crossing over with us, were two American actors, both dope-fiends. They were on their way, with an act, to Australia, via London. I think these men played with Weber and Fields, at various times. At any rate, they spoiled my game. They knew Gillig and knew I was Chicago May. They slept most of the way over, keeping to their cabins until we neared Liverpool, when they spied me and the Ambassador's party, and tipped off Gillig.

I could see the cold-wave coming. The party politely told me that the pilot had brought out letters which compelled them to alter their plans. They were very sorry, but our projected journey, together, to the French capital, would have to be cancelled, etc. I told them that I, too, was sorry, but we could not have traveled together, anyhow, because one of the passengers on board, in the second-cabin, a Mr. Harry X., had only just discovered me, and had told me something which compelled me to stay in Liverpool for a few days. I was so mad, I would not go on the express-train which took the first-class passengers to London.

Harry hung on till we were both broke. There I was in London with jewelry and clothes. To make matters worse, I had my man to keep. Necessity is the mother of invention. I got the kid to get me some chloral, and then I hunted up a John, with the usual successful result.

My sweetheart was a nice fellow, and I was very fond of him; but he liked the easy life, and would not hustle for legitimate work. As soon as I got some money to the good, I sent him back to New York. The easy dollar is a temptation to most men, even if they are straight.

I remember, one time, I came back to New York, after a trip to England, and found this same sweetheart drunk. He had the key to my safe-deposit box, had been gambling, and had taken my jewelry and pawned it. I did not have the heart to have him arrested.

When I went to Cairo, Egypt, from London, to meet Pat Sheedy, and arrange to raise money to spring Guerin, I traveled by boat, from Marseilles, on the Messiger Line. I, the deportee, in spite of the American Express robbery in Paris, traveled overland, through France, without being discovered. During my stay in Cairo, I stole about five thou-

sand dollars, most of which I got by fainting in a man's arms at Shepheard's Hotel. I slid to the stairs when he let go of me to get help, and cached the bills under the stair runner. When I "recovered," the next day, I got the money.

Pat contributed liberally, on that occasion, and made plans, which he afterwards perfected, to raise more dough. When I was in Aylesbury Prison, Guerin ought to have reciprocated and tried to get me out. Instead of that, he threatened to shoot anybody who raised a finger to spring (release) me.

I am not really sore on the old man, because I think his sufferings and privations, while he was escaping from Devil's Island, made him batty. Nothing can convince him but that I betrayed him to the dicks, when he was hiding for fear of extradition. He always was suspicious and jealous. Didn't he blame Sophie Lyons for squealing on him when he was pinched, and did time, for the robbery, in Lyons, France? The last I heard of him, he was a barber in Manchester. Lately he was given three months for loitering in a Piccadilly hotel in London.

My trip back through the Mediterranean was unusually enjoyable. I was succeeding in raising money for Guerin.

When I left South America in a hurry, as hereinbefore explained, I took passage on the Hamburg-American liner, Prince Sigmund. The reason for this was that it was the first boat out for Europe; and I did not dare to wait at Santos any longer than was absolutely necessary. We had a delightful voyage. It was calm all the way, and there was plenty of good drinking, eating, music, and dancing. The ship was crowded with Portuguese harvest-men, going home from the fields of Brazil, where the natives were too lazy to do their own work.

There was a high-class Portuguese in the first-cabin. He was some sort of a radical but, strange enough, so rich that he might well have been a staunch conservative. You can't tell a book by its cover. I became a radical, by birth and circumstances; but I don't know how he got that way. We became great friends.

This baby was always arguing with the captain. He insisted the steerage had bought and paid for so-and-so-many cubic feet of space per passenger. On the other hand, he contended the money-grasping owners and their agent, the skipper, had robbed the steerage of half their space-rights by shipping so-and-so-many extra bags of coffee. Not content with this, he denounced the capitalists for their robbing the poor men of part of their food-allowance.

To show he had reason for the faith that was in him, this philanthropist bought cheese, bread, and wine from the ship-stores and distributed it among his protégés, daily. This must have given him double pleasure—first, to think he was helping the poor and down-trodden; secondly, to laugh at the captain, who was incensed at the showing-up he was getting. The hungry mob would eat like wolves, right out, publicly, on deck.

When we neared Oporto, where most of the harvest hands were to debark, I suggested to a few of them that it would be good sport to stick their knives into some of the coffee bags on deck, after the ship docked. Then, by the time the vessel got to Hamburg, there would be plenty of loose coffee in the hold, unless the crew heard the noise of the falling beans and sewed up the rents. I said this more as a joke than anything else, thinking only a few of the bags would be cut.

The men, however, took the hint—and then some. They

knifed every bag within reach, and knifed copiously. Talk about guttural oaths! It was hell aboard that ship, after they discovered loose coffee all over the hold.

The boat was to have stopped at Dover, but did not do so, because there were only two passengers who wanted to land there. It seems, it was against the regulations or the law, or something of that sort, to stop the ship under such circumstances. I did not have much opportunity to steal on this trip. The men were not of the sporting type.

But one old duck lent me four hundred marks, when I told him a hard-luck story, gave him a phony address in Edinburgh, signed a note and promised to pay in one month. He was a Dutchman, going back home for a visit, who was lonesome and wanted company. I thought he ought to pay me something for entertaining him, aside from the drinks, so I didn't bother to pay the note.

I took a leather from an inoffensive young man. It only had a few marks in it besides his fare. I put the poke back into his pocket, and he was none the wiser. I was sorry for him.

On the trip, I became friendly with the first officer. When we arrived in Hamburg, he took me out to show me the dance-halls in a place which I think was called St. Paulus. We had a very good time, and he was very liberal. I did not rob him; because he did not have much money; and because he gave me a hundred marks when I told him I was short and wanted to borrow only that small amount. He was no piker. Perhaps he knew that he wouldn't have got the money back, anyhow, if he had lent it to me.

At this time, I did not want to take a chance of being picked up in France. I took boat at Hamburg and landed

at Catharine Street Dock in London, prepared to defend my stool-pigeon charge.

They say coming events cast their shadows before them. I was crying, while waiting to get off the ship. The captain asked me if anybody had insulted me. I said, no, I just felt depressed. He said something about it being no wonder, just coming from a place like Brazil to a climate such as England, with its gloomy fogs. I drove to a quiet boarding-house to hide myself and rest, with the result I describe in another place.

CHAPTER XXII

THE GUERIN SHOOTING

So much has been written and said about this affair, which landed me in prison for ten years, that I shall merely give the outlines of the event. But I shall explain the causes for the shooting. This is something which has never yet been printed. I am glad of the opportunity to do so, for lies by enemies, and people who did not know, have done me considerable hurt.

As I have already said, I first met Edward Guerin, born in Chicago, and raised around its stockyards, when we attended a thief's funeral, in London. Both of us were successful, prosperous thieves.

He was a gang-burglar and safe-cracker, at the head of his branch of the criminal profession. I was an independent badger, at the head of mine. Both of us were good-looking, healthy, vigorous, well-dressed specimens of our respective sexes.

There was mutual admiration, and attraction, between us. Neither of us was living with anybody else, at the time, so we soon made a match. I lived with Eddie several months. Then came the express-company robbery in Paris, as related elsewhere, and we were separated.

After I was pardoned, and had helped raise the money for Eddie's release, I started to live with Babe Thompson, a first-class confidence-man and a crook dealing only in

finesse. This was not disloyalty on my part, for Eddie and I had got drunk, once, before the Paris affair, and I had told him I no longer loved him. At that time I had no other attachment. Anyhow, I owed Guerin nothing, though I still admired him.

My former man escaped from Devil's Island to Chicago, and I wrote him, there, telling him to remain. He came back to London, however, and was in hiding. He became jealous of me and my Babe. He threatened both of us.

Thompson was in Paris, and I had gone to Ireland to visit my people, when Guerin returned to England. Seeing a newspaper ad that I would learn something to my advantage if I went to a certain place in Newton Street, Holborn, London, I answered it and dropped into Guerin's hands. I fell for it because I thought, maybe, mother-in-law Sharpe had willed me some money.

I was a virtual prisoner, and had to go with Eddie to Germany and Italy, where both of us worked, but not very successfully. On our return to England I escaped from my keeper when he thought he had me drugged and was about to disfigure my face with acid. Once he threatened to shoot me, and had his gun out. I only saved myself by reminding him that I had helped him to escape from Devil's Island. My former maid, Emily Skinner, helped Guerin watch me.

Babe Thompson got cold feet, as a result of the threats and kidnaping, and advised me to take an extended trip, until Eddie cooled off. This was the reason for my going to South America, some of the details of which I have related.

While I was in Rio de Janeiro, I had been shown some newspapers. The News of the World was one of them in which was set forth, in large, front-page type, that Guerin had been arrested in London and was held for extradition to

France. The papers said, also, that he had been betrayed by a woman—Chicago May. And worse still: "Betrayed out of jealousy, because he had transferred his affections to another woman."

I came back pronto. My integrity as a crook had been attacked. I wanted to face my accusers and get at the facts. As a matter of truth, it was the French authorities, which had asked Scotland Yard whether Guerin was in London or not. The Yard, thereupon, lined up every man on the force who had ever seen Guerin, and sicked them on to the trail. Chief Inspector Kane told me this, afterwards.

Again conceit trapped the otherwise astute Prince of Burglars. There he was, a fugitive from justice, ostentatiously reading a French newspaper in front of a newsstand, in broad daylight. And he looked no more like a frog-eater than he looked like a sissy. The dick, who arrested him, had reason to know him. Eddie had cut him on the wrist, when he had been arrested by him, years before that. And Eddie went along with this sergeant like a lamb, not putting up a fight, as he usually did, on such occasions. Scotland Yard wouldn't have bothered about Guerin if it hadn't been queried, and felt its usual pride in pretending to know everything, and finding out everything.

The extradition proceedings lasted for more than a year. The victim was confined to Brixton Prison. I worked in London, handicapped, somewhat, by the insinuations that I was a stool. My real friends did not believe it. They knew me too well for that. I helped Eddie in his predicament, notwithstanding his treatment of me, but I did not visit him in jail. Emily Skinner did, however, and that is where she got the weather-gauge of me.

Towards the end of Ed's imprisonment I became ac-

quainted with Charlie Smith, and started to live with him. He was a high-grade prowler, of a good family. He had been working, and running a gambling-joint, in South Africa, after having served in the British cavalry during the Boer War. There was a brave man! He was not the kind to lean on a woman. When there was work or danger, him for the front line trenches. He was a gentleman, and reminded me of my first husband.

The time came now, when Guerin got out of prison. He claimed to be Irish, because his father was born in Ireland and had never been naturalized in America. He, himself, also claimed to have been born in Ireland while his mother was home on a visit. The Chicago fire, 1871, had burnt up the birth records, so there was no way for the prosecution to prove Eddie was a liar. Best of all, a Scotch lawyer, Sir Richard Muir, defended him, for the honor of his profession and for what he thought was right, without receiving much in the way of fees.

I was glad Eddie escaped, and hoped he would leave me alone. Vain hope! Word was soon passed along the line that the crazy man was threatening to cut off my ears—anything to disfigure my beauty. I would not quit the town. I was not yellow.

One day Smith and I were eating in a restaurant, when we were tipped off by Hattie Rock, wife of the Phony Kid, that Guerin was on the war-path, drunk, threatening to shoot Smith and carve me. Smith wouldn't quit either. He got mad.

We jumped into a cab, drove to a fence, Ruby Michaels, and Smith got a pistol. I took some extra cartridges. We were told, there, that Eddie had been in that morning and bought an automatic. We were not looking for trouble, but

we plumped right into it. There was Ed on the sidewalk looking for us, near Bernard Street Station.

I yelled, "There he is!" The cab was stopped, and Smith got out, warning Guerin to draw. Both pulled about the same time. Smith's bullet missed and Guerin's gun jammed. Charlie kept firing. A girl fell screaming, but not hit, as it turned out later. Eddie was shot once, losing two toes. The police came, and we were arrested.

When the automatic jammed, it was passed to a trailer. We were acting in self-defence. Guerin, however, made out that he was an innocent, defenseless man, pursued by a ruffian, who was egged on by a jealous woman. He appeared against us, and won. We lost! It was the Year of our Lord 1907.

Smith got life in Dartmoor Prison, but got out in fifteen years, through the intercession of Lady Astor. I got fifteen years in Aylesbury Prison, but was deported to the United States in a little more than ten years.

The trial was a farce, notwithstanding the reputation of British Justice. The personal equation had full swing, once the perjured testimony and the circumstantial evidence gave it a chance. I was a bad woman with a record. My former maid, Skinner, a dope, not only lied about the circumstances of the actual shooting, but produced a lot of my correspondence. This last showed I had nicked the barrister, and other aristocrats, and seemed to show I had caused an English officer to desert.

Smith was charged with assault and battery with intent to kill, and I was charged with being an accessory before the fact, which charges were strengthened by the fact that cartridges identical with those used in Smith's gun were found in a curio closet in my room.

Added to this, a knife, rather larger than any permitted by law, was found in my bag. The fact of the case was that Smith had had the knife in his possession earlier in the evening, and had given it to me to keep for him. I had hidden it for some time beneath one of the folds of my skirt, but finally finding this awkward and inconvenient, had handed the knife back to Smith with the injunction that he get rid of it in some way, as it was dangerous to carry. Instead of getting rid of it, he slipped it into my bag without my knowledge, where it was found by the police. In order not to complicate things for Smith, I admitted ownership of the knife.

Then there was my French record, and Charlie's record. To cap the climax, a visiting judge, from New York, sat on the bench and whispered all about me to his lordship—Justice Darling. When sentence was pronounced, I got the shock of my life, but grinned just the same. Charlie went on like a mad man, tried to get at the judge to kill him, and called him a sod. The sentences were proportioned to our past and the quality of our victims, not to our alleged crime.

Speaking of British Justice reminds me of two other cases which occurred about the same time as mine, and which illustrate, by comparison:

The same week, the same judge sentenced "Soldier Annie," a very common, soldier moll, to eighteen months. She stuck a hatpin into a workman's brain and killed him, after he had bought her a pot of beer but refused to give her any money. She did it, while her male companion was helping her rob the resisting man. This learned judge also gave a woman five years who threw carbolic acid into a matron's face and severely burnt her. If you molest society,

tackle the poor only, and you will get much lighter sentences.

I have, purposely, only sketched in this picture. The details are interesting. It is hard to keep from giving them. They are many, and would easily fill a book with their dramatic possibilities. But I am writing the history of my life and must not lose the sense of perspective.

Some of the high-lights of my life have already been published. In order to make them tidbits for public delectation, they were dressed up so that I hardly knew them. The basic facts were there, but the frills were impossible.

I suppose I shall be criticized for paying too much attention to minor incidents and not enough to major ones. But, if I am to tell my story, I must tell it in my own way.

CHAPTER XXIII

AYLESBURY PRISON

Aside from the fact that I had tried Aylesbury duck, when it was on the menu in London restaurants, and found it delicious, I had little knowledge, before 1907, of Buckinghamshire, where the prison-town was situated. I had made occasional visits to the county, purely for pleasure. One boating-party took me past Eton College, across the Thames from Windsor; and I had spent a few hours in Burnham Beeches, which is the remnant of an ancient forest. On more than one occasion, I had heard the expression, "Bucks bread and beef." That was about the extent of my knowledge of the place where I was to spend ten years and two months in prison.

After I got there, it interested me to read all I could about my temporary home; so that I may, now, truthfully say, that I am better acquainted with the local history of this interesting English county than almost any other place in the world. The town and prison are on the north, and steeper side, of the Chiltern Hills.

"Don't grumble," warned my lawyer, "or you will rue it." I obeyed so well that I not only didn't complain, but I didn't even petition.

I knew I had been trapped because I had injured the aristocracy of England. It was not because I was in the company of Charlie Smith when he shot the jealous, crazy

Guerin in defense of himself—and me. If I had not made the mistake of sending copies of the Rio News and the Corrio de Manha to my maid, Skinner, describing what a success I was making in Brazil with Sir Sidney Gore, Guerin might have cooled down and not held his anger long enough to pick on poor Charlie and me. However, there is no use in crying over spilled milk. I paid the price. Charlie paid a bigger price.

The first thing we did when we got into the prison, and the big door clanged shut, was to go through the formality of being transferred from one gang of officials to another. There was the usual exchange of the necessary papers and receipts, one crowd taking the responsibility of holding us, and the other being relieved of that duty. Then we were entered on the prison rolls, and our clothes were taken from us, in exchange for the prison garb, marked with the government's broad arrow.

I suppose everybody is familiar with the arrangement of the double doors of prisons. When the outer one is opened, the inner one is closed, and vice versa. This is a precaution to prevent escape or entrance by any unauthorized person. The space between the doors is large enough to take care of a large wagon, or van, together with twenty or thirty people. When you get into this enclosure, you are in a similar position to that of a boat in the lock of a canal.

Aylesbury Prison was an antiquated, rambling building, surrounded by a thick, high wall. It had few modern appliances, either in the way of plumbing or machinery. The place was not very cold, but it was damp and the water was saturated with limestone, in solution, so much so that you could not leave it standing long without a plentiful precipitation.

After we had all had a bath, we were apportioned among the vacant cells. There were more than three hundred of them. There was only one woman to a cell. No men were prisoners in the institution. As the cells would be vacated, because of death, pardon, commutation or expiration of sentence, new prisoners would be brought in.

One of the excitements of the life was to say good-by, when one went out, or hello when one came in. I arrived at Aylesbury just as my dear friend, Annie Gleason, was going out on one of her sentences.

All the newcomers were given some hot tea and bread and shooed off to their pigeon-holes. As I had plenty of time on my hands, I stretched out the examination of my cell to an unimaginable length of time, noting each little detail as carefully as if I was going to buy it and did not want to be stuck with flaws in my bargain. Many and many a time in the long years thereafter, I used to go over that same cell, hoping to find something new to occupy my mind. I knew every square inch of my particular home, could tell wherein it differed from every other cell I was privileged to enter, and noticed the slightest changes which occurred in it. An unusual mark, or a crack, or spot, on the surface of my domain, was an event of real importance.

There were few flies. They are rare in England, but I even tried to make friends with a couple of these insects, which ventured into my prison. If only I could have had some sort of an animal to care for and love, it would have been of the greatest help in keeping my mind occupied and giving me something to do. Thank God, we were not tortured with the silent system of confinement.

It did not take long to get used to the prison routine. Everybody but the sick, who had to be excused by the

doctor, had to rise smartly, at 6:30 in the morning, wash, and dress. This was no hardship to most of us, because we had plenty of time to sleep and think. It was a God-send to have to do something. We ate alone in our cells.

Breakfast was served at 7:30—six ounces of bread and one pint of tea, generally cold, with a small portion of sugar. During the World War, the sugar was cut out. Then we went to work. There was hard-labor, soft-labor and no labor at all, depending on the class you were in. Most of us wanted soft-labor. The two extremes were tough for most people, who, if they were normal, did not want to work too hard and, likewise, dreaded the monotony of absolute idleness, alone with their own thoughts.

I was sentenced to hard-labor, and the term means exactly what it says, in England. At 10 o'clock, the hard-labor women were given two ounces of hard-cheese and a small piece of bread.

Dinner came at noon. It consisted of two ounces of meat with thick flour-gravy, one potato, which varied in size, about two ounces of cabbage, and six ounces of bread.

Supper came along about 4:30, depending on the time of year. Then we got a pint of cocoa or tea, and it was more likely to be hot than in the morning, and four ounces of bread. After supper, we were locked up for the night.

This was the regimen for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The Thursday dinner consisted of hard, cold suet-pudding, with black treacle. The meat, on Mondays and Wednesdays, was beef; on Tuesdays, mutton; and on Fridays, just a few ounces of boiled fish and a couple of boiled potatoes. On Saturdays we had a stew which was good, sometimes. On Sundays, we had three ounces of bully (cold)

beef and a few hot potatoes, with the same quantity of bread as on week-days. We went to bed about 10 P. M.

During the War, they gave us three ounces less bread; but, at night, we got hot gruel without milk or sugar. Our pint cup or plate was filled up with this. During the last two years, the prisoners were given lettuce, at night, during the season, with salt, but no vinegar or oil. For eight years, prior to this, I did not have a single bit of green food.

Many were the times when I thought of poor Smith when things were going bad with me, wondering how he was getting along. On those occasions, I always thought of the time when we were parted. The judge had had his say. Smith had cursed the judge and raved, calling him a sod and trying to get at him to kill him, so as to be sure he would get hanged in exchange for the life-sentence. I realized, partially, at that time, what was coming to me. I laughed, so as to show the minions of the law that they hadn't broken my spirit, and to show my sympathy for Charlie, to encourage him.

I rather flattered myself during these periods of thought, that the dear boy was thinking of me. I was quite sure he was, because he was always considerate of women, being born and bred that way, tough as he might be with men. But what was the use of thinking? The weary grind had to go on. Back again would come the thoughts. Oh hell, was I growing crazy? Was Charlie as crazy, by now, as I was?

During all the time I was penned up, I rarely dreamed at night. I suppose I was too tired to dream. When I did dream, however, I did not have the nightmare. The dreams were not fearful and awesome. On the contrary, they were generally pleasant.

Now I would be a girl again, home with my family, en-

joying every moment of my life. The joy of living was on me and was being satisfied. Frequently, I would imagine it was meal-time. I had a natural hunger. With what pleasure I ate the well-known meals! How we talked and joshed the table round!

Again I was in my prime. I was living at the best hotels, the result of having stolen wealth. With what delight I would scan the bill-of-fare. How I would call down the poor flunky when some dish was not up to the standard my finical self required. How well I knew how to order with discrimination!

No, the drink was not properly made. These English did not breed bartenders who knew how to mix cocktails. Hadn't I especially said I wanted that Manhattan dry, (made with French Vermouth). And here the dub had used the sweet insipid Italian stuff! What was that noise? It sounded like a bell. It was a bell. It was the prison rising-bell! The matrons were pounding on the doors.

Good God, why should I be tortured this way? I was so happy! Now, I am so sick, hungry, forlorn. Why, indeed, must I be tortured this way? Why couldn't I just sleep on forever, dreaming? Sometimes it would be hours, after I started work, before the depression from the awakening was dispelled.

At first, the food they gave me turned my stomach. But after the first revolt of my stomach, I never knew a day when I was not so hungry I could have stolen and devoured more than was given me, of the awful, noisome prison-fare.

I commenced my sentence in 1907, and was put to work in the twine shop, making rope for the government. Two other women and myself made up our team. We had to turn

a wheel to spin the yarn. The prison doctor, himself, owned up it was a two-horsepower machine. All day long, we turned the crank, relieving each other. When one of us was not particularly well, the others would make shift to lighten the burden of the indisposed one, by doing extra work. I was in this department for a year.

Then they put me on a small machine, making balls of string. I worked hard at it, standing in one spot, turning all day long. It was a relief when I was ordered to scrub floors on my hands and knees.

Again my work was changed.

I was sent to the laundry. There was no modern equipment. The water was heated in large coppers. The ceiling was open like an unshingled shed. We heated our irons on old-fashioned stoves.

The first thing they did was to make me stoker, I being strong and husky, compared to the others. I hadn't had any experience in firing. The result was, before I learned better by trial, that I would not remove the clinkers; and the fire would go out. Then I would have to rake out the grate, carry up more coals, and make a fresh fire.

I spent five years in prison, without medical aid. My strong constitution was beginning to wilt under the strain. I believe I would have died through neglect.

A young Irish doctor came to the prison one day. His name was Morton. Right away, he noticed my condition by merely looking at me. I had made up my mind that I would never complain. They might bend me, but they would never break me, unless they killed me entirely.

This doctor asked me how long I had done. When I told him five years, he inquired if I had been in the hospital often. I told him, "Yes, once, to clean." He ordered me sent

to the hospital immediately, and kept me there several weeks.

Along came a notice for him to report to the navy, and I never heard any more of him. I was put back to work, "cured." I have often wondered what became of that kind-hearted youngster. I hope he came back safe to his home. He was about the only one in that prison that I ever did wish any good.

I do not know whether or not that doctor knew I had contracted consumption. He would not have been permitted to tell, anyhow. If he had been allowed to stay at the prison, he would have found out the truth. As for the rest of the horse-doctors I met in prison, they had no medical skill. They were just gossipy old women, and insisted everybody was faking who described an ailment.

There wasn't an X-ray machine in the place, to find out anything by that scientific instrument. Many poor women died for want of treatment. The authorities would let them go so far in sickness that it was impossible to save them.

I often wondered why I did not die. Death might have been a blessed relief, but, just when I would get to the lowest depths of despondency, I would get mad and make up my mind I would see them in hell, before I would give in, and give up all hope.

When the World War broke out, most of us perked up. Hope was revived. If only the Germans would win! I am sure I would have prayed for them to win, if I had believed it would have done any good. My friend, Annie Gleason, was in the old can (prison) again, and we consoled each other, by saying we were sure the Dutch would put the kibosh to Johnnie Bull. We were certain that the War would be over if London was captured; and we were equally cer-

tain we would be liberated because we were citizens of a neutral country.

As a matter of fact, I am still positive the British would have been licked to a frazzle, if the Americans had not stepped in when they did. Anyhow, the entry of the United States into the War dashed all our hopes. Poor Annie cried for days, when the news reached us. Shortly after that, I was on my way back to America, a deportee. Annie almost died in the cursed place, before they removed her and the other prisoners to Liverpool.

While the War was on, there would be the excitement of an air-raid near us, every once in a while. Then we would all have to go down into a dark cellar. It was pitiful to hear the poor old women, crying with fear the night through, when they heard the buzzers in the little town. Oftener than not, our enforced stampede would turn out to be a false alarm. Imagine what it was like in that dark, dismal hole, to wake up and know that you were like a rat in a trap, and they would not let you out even if you could have helped yourself!

Once they had a big fire in the prison. The crowd gathered outside and shouted to "let the poor women out." Nothing doing! The fire was put out, and they would not let some kind-hearted ladies, who lived in a house on the corner across from us, send in hot coffee and food to comfort us.

When I was in the laundry, we did work for the women who were detained in a detention camp. They were rich and paid for our services. We took special care to do this work well, because we felt that the ladies sent us the work out of sympathy for convicts. One of these women put up a beautiful basket of food and sent it over to me. Before

I could hide it, the wardress got hold of it and threw it into the furnace. It was well I was not outside and not near any weapon. A baseball bat would have been just as handy as a gun.

All of us were starving during the War. As I have said, they took three ounces off our one-pound bread-ration. If you will weigh a loaf of bread, you can compare it with what we got. Worse than the smallness of the amount was the quality. It was so bad that it could only be eaten when starvation forced you to down it. Sometimes, the matrons would find a piece of bread hidden away in some corner. They would take it and burn it up. In the long years I had to serve, I was only given extra food twice.

As far as the matrons were concerned, it could not be expected that they should be particularly efficient. They were paid the equivalent of six dollars a week. Most of them had dependents. Notwithstanding this, however, there was little graft—unlike the American prisons.

A letter could not be sent out or received without consulting the police. I did not write or get letters during my entire term of ten years, though I am told they were sent me. They were kept from me. Do you wonder I am sore against a government which would stoop to such persecution?

As a result of our labor, we earned a penny a day, which would be about fifty cents, American, a month. After serving seven years, a prisoner is allowed to spend one quarter to one half of his current earnings, depending on circumstances. For some reason or other, I got permission to spend all of my dole.

After the War had been going on some time, the authorities asked the prisoners who could spend their fifty cents,

to give half of it to the Red Cross to buy cigarettes for the soldiers and sailors. When it came my turn to sign up, I flatly refused. Some of the matrons remonstrated with me for being unpatriotic. I said, "Let the rich English government look after its soldiers. I can't spare any from my pittance."

"Perhaps some of your own family, your Irish cousins, are over-seas. You would be doing a noble deed to make a little sacrifice for them," the head-matron said to me.

"Not likely," said I, hotly. "If any relative of mine has fallen so low as to wear a red coat, he deserves to go without smokes, and I hope he suffers much worse than that. My friends and family were fighting for freedom, Easter week."

During that time, 1916, when the rebellion was going on in Ireland, the English matrons insulted both the Irish prisoners and the Irish matrons. Most of the matrons were Irish, and they deserved all they got. In France, they get Corsicans for jailors; in England they find quite a number of tinker-Irish to do the dirty work. Anyhow, they were snubbed, right and left, during and after the rebellion.

There were many things happened while I was in this English woman's-prison. Girls were killed every once in a while because of faulty machinery. There was no reason for this. As in every jail, the working equipment was of the cheapest. It seemed to hurt the authorities to instal modern improvements for the safeguarding of the health and lives of jail-birds. All work had to be done by hand wherever possible.

Even though the object was to find enough employment for the girls, there was ample opportunity to lighten burdens and make operations safe, without reducing the

amount of work to be done. Everything was of the crudest. Somebody in charge must have thought more of punishment than rehabilitation.

But justice was administered in that jail, as in all jails, in a way not contemplated by the authorities. After I had done four of my ten years, a girl, named Brown, was brought in for passing the queer (false money), and helping to make it. In other words, she was convicted of both counterfeiting and uttering.

Her gang had a den in the East End of London. The shop was so skillfully equipped, with the most up-to-date apparatus for coining, engraving, etc., that the plant was afterwards set up in Madame Tussaud's Wax Works. Some of the men in the game were caught and convicted, but others beat the dicks to it.

After Brown started to serve her time, some of Scotland Yard's bulls came down to our prison. By threats and promises of commutation of sentence, they persuaded the low creature to turn stool. She gave the sleuths the names of all the men in the operation, and told them where they were under cover. To cap the climax, she went to court, in her convict rags, in the custody of two wardresses, and testified against the poor boys.

The grapevine (secret system of communication between prisoners) operates even in England. Nothing could happen without all of us getting to know about it. Brown was due for some dirty slams which might prove fatal. It is curious how vindictive some criminals can get in matters of this kind, even those who otherwise are in poor standing among crooks.

Brown had to be kept locked up in the wardresses' quarters. Otherwise, justice would have been done her by a court

and jury outside the law. It wasn't necessary to have any speeches, prepare any briefs, or even have conversations about the matter. The verdict was unanimous, and was a warning to all other betrayers in that jurisdiction. During the rest of her term, and she only got a few years off for her perfidy, Brown worked for the chief matron and we could never get at her.

A stool-pigeon has a harder life in jail than on the outside, because he cannot move out of the jurisdiction, and hide. Even the "stars," who are not underworld women, despise such cattle.

While I was doing my ten years, many of the girls were sent to the criminal-insane asylum at Broadmoor. Some had really been driven insane by their treatment; others were no more insane than the rest of us. Very few prisoners ever come out of that asylum, which word, properly, means a haven of refuge. It was safe enough, no doubt, in the eyes of the authorities, for those who kicked. If a prisoner would complain to the visiting magistrates about abuses in the prison, she was doomed to a ride to the bug-house. They knew in their hearts that most of the complaints were justified.

Mary Oland told the squire, one day, that the Governor was frequently drunk. I, myself, had often seen him so tight, he could barely walk. Mary went to Broadmoor, all right! The poor soul was perfectly sane, but made the mistake of talking out of school.

The Governor was a doctor. He was supposed to visit every prisoner once a day. Instead of doing that, he held parties at his home, outside the prison. His deputy, I am told, also had a beautiful home outside the walls. So did the resident chaplain.

The poor Catholic priest lived in a little shack next to his church. Aside from the Catholic convicts and matrons, he had only two families, in his parish, for which he received fifty pounds a year. The others, I have just mentioned, got big salaries and residences free. These kept staffs of free servants.

All the keepers lived outside the prison. The wardresses had a house inside the gates. Besides being poorly paid, these ladies were a hard, bad lot, ruling with iron hands. If they took a dislike to a prisoner, they had a despicable way of framing her, by lying about her; or, worse still, by planting contraband in her cell and then searching for it. One girl committed suicide as a result of the way one matron rode her and beat her.

If I had the pen of a Dickens, I would write about Aylesbury the way that guy wrote about Dotheboy Hall in Nicholas Nickleby.

The acme of cruelty was the eye which never slept. It can't be beaten, as far as I know, if you look the world over. In the inside middle panel of every cell, a human eye was painted, complete in every detail, pupil, iris, eyelashes, eyebrow, etc. It was not only painted but carved, to add to the realism of the thing. On the outside, the spy could slide a disk and substitute her own eye for the artificial one. No matter how you would place yourself in your cell, standing, sitting or lying down, that cursed eye seemed to follow you.

One Sunday, the chaplain preached a sermon on "Thou God seest me." He had the good taste and consideration to liken our cell-eyes to the all-seeing eye of the Almighty, so that we poor ignoramuses could understand what he was driving at.

Poor Countess Markievicz told me her "eye" pretty nearly drove her mad. For the first week she was there, for participating in the Easter rebellion of the Irish in Dublin, she said she had to walk the floor every night, trying to exorcise the devilish thing. Punishment was bound to follow, if you defaced it or were caught covering it. I, myself, was worried by it for a long time, but I was young and strong, and finally got so that I could sleep, and be damned to it. You can get used to nearly anything, but you never quite got over the horror of being constantly watched and of having your privacy invaded. Whether you were staring at it or not, it was useless to try to persuade yourself that there was not a real eye looking at you.

As I have said, my principal suffering was hunger. I would be so famished that I would gobble down my bread for breakfast and dinner. When supper came, I would, then, have nothing but a pint of awful cocoa. Sometimes, another prisoner, not so voracious as I was, would slip me a hunk of bread. Most of my mates were kind-hearted but cowed, the spirit crushed out of them. When I would get this extra food, I would soak it in water until it became twice its usual size. Then, when I ate it, I tried to kid myself that it was quite filling and satisfying.

This was the limestone country. There would be a sediment of lime in the bottom of your tin of water, every morning, after standing all night. The cells had one little hole for light and air. They were not heated. The climate was good, however, and I did not suffer from cold. But the limestone floors and walls made the cells damp and unhealthy.

Sanitary conditions were bad. The workshops and the laundry were not fit places to herd animals in, much less

human beings. The only place that was fit to work in was the sewing-room. I only worked there during the last six months of my sojourn. They did not want to see me die on their hands, so they let up on me towards the end. During the last-mentioned time, the English were getting the worst of it in the War. I had to do my allotment of work, while listening to the wardresses and sucker-prisoners. They were always condoling with each other about the atrocities of the Huns and the nobleness of the Johnnie Bulls.

The Lord helps him who helps himself. I wasn't a thief for nothing. I would steal finished work from the other girls, take off their names and numbers, substitute my own, and put it into my own basket. I played fair with the poor girls, though, because I only stole work which had been passed and for which they had got credit.

I worked the same trick with the bags. When I would come to take an armful up to my cell, I would grab as many finished ones as I could lay my hands on, provided always that it worked no hardship on a mate. Sometimes, I would be in bed, or reading, when the "eye" would say, in the matron's voice, "How is it you are not working?" My reply was that I had finished. I was always stalling around and was never caught.

Holidays in jail were like other days, except that, on one Christmas, after George ascended the throne, we got roast beef and plum-pudding. The heavy meal nearly killed many of the convicts, they appreciated it so much. That Christmas and New Year's, Her Grace, the Duchess of Bedford sent us enough tea, so that we each had a strong pint. The matrons, not to be outdone, contributed tea from their stores. That Christmas night, some of the convict-ladies were actually

staggering as if they were drunk. They ought to have given the gratuities to us in small quantities, gradually, the way famished shipwrecked are treated.

There was a system in vogue among the girls, known as putting the pot on. It referred to heating water, for tea, in your cell. Mutton-fat, for making twine, would be filched in the shop. Yarn would be used for a wick; and a candle would be made. The hardest thing was to get hold of a match. If that could be negotiated, the next thing was to get a couple of bricks. Then, on a Saturday, when we had a few hours before the doors were opened, the dinner-tin would be filled with water and some stolen tea would be brewed. There was no place for the smoke to go except into the room and out the window.

If one of the guards smelt the burning mutton-fat or saw the smoke, he would shout and investigate. Out would go the candle. The men, good souls, rarely reported the girls. In ten years, I only knew of one who did so. He was a new watchman and he did not understand the racket.

It was a Christmas morning and he thought the place was on fire. Agnes O'Neill had got next to some tea in the store-room, and she was going to surprise the rest of us by having a Yule-tide treat of a good pint of tea. The lunk-head rushed off half-cocked and reported "fire." Poor girl, they threw out her nice hot tea, and put her into the dungeon over the holiday. She had only cold water and bread for breakfast. Otherwise, she was fed the same as the rest of us, but she lost time from her good-conduct rebate.

There was a young woman in the prison, Tab Scott, who was possessed of the devil. One time they locked her up in the refractory ward. She had found some stove-polish, a brush and some whiting, which was used to polish brass

door-knobs. What does the poor nut do but strip and change herself into a coal-black woman. When she was smeared all over, she made large white buttons all down the front of her body. Along came visitors.

Tabby was a Catholic. Some priests happened to arrive that day, and, when the chaplain told them, at luncheon, about her sad case, they asked to see her. The procession arrived at the cell, at peace with the world; but, when the lunatic jumped at them, they fell back in both earthly and holy horror. A matron told us, afterwards, that one of the young priests, when he had recovered sufficiently, laughed so immoderately that he was reproved by his elders. Poor Tab was covered promptly and hustled to the bath, where it took more than an hour to scrub her off.

Some time after this, the girl, being still possessed of the devil, was busy digging a hole in the yard, outside the penal ward. Prisoners who were only sentenced to "prison"—and not "hard-labor"—had to exercise outside, daily, unless they were sick or it was raining. The matron thought Tab was amusing herself and paid no heed to her. Suddenly, the convict disappeared. After a short search, she was found in the hole, trying to bury herself. If the keeper had let her alone, the chances are the poor girl would not have harmed herself. I thought she was a fox, even though crazy.

Another time, Tabby wanted to go to the maternity ward. She wanted to become a second Virgin Mary, and she was very fond of a matron who had been transferred to that ward. Think of the horror of having a baby in such a place! Anyhow, the lady, who consorted with the devil, kept telling everybody she was pregnant.

Now nobody could tell what might have happened to bring the girl into this delicate condition, so the doctor

asked her for a specimen of her urine. Horrors, the test showed Tabby might be telling the truth! At least, she had kidney complications, Bright's Disease, albumen, etc. Off she was hustled to the ward for ladies in her condition. Visions, of official investigations, set the whole jail agog. But the cute woman was soon back with the rest of us again. It was discovered she had secured her specimen from a mate who was *enceinte*.

On another occasion, a woman's wooden leg disappeared from her cell on the hospital tier. While the guards were searching high and low, some one discovered Tabby strapping it on herself, preparatory to hobbling to the workshop.

With all this, Tab Scott was not sent to the asylum at Broadmoor; and yet, as I have said, other perfectly sane women were sent there for punishment, for telling the truth about bad conditions in the jail. The most cruel part about the whole affair was, that they generally waited until the victim's time had expired, in the prison, before she was immured in the living-grave. Their method was to put the "fear of God" into the other prisoners, so that they would not complain. No wonder I took my lawyer's advice and kept my mouth shut. I would have been a fool to do otherwise.

The Poorhouse was across the road from the Prison. When I was in the hospital I had a chance to look at it out of barred windows. We women used to amuse ourselves by looking down the long, white winding-road that led from the miserable little town of Aylesbury to the big house on the hill where we lived in security, if not in peace. When some one would walk or drive along the road, which did not happen often enough to suit us, there was quite a flutter of excitement. The discoverer of the event would pass the tip, and

as many of us as could would sneak to the windows to see and whisper.

How we would figure out who it was, what was the object of the journey, how long it would take, what would be the result, etc.! It occupied our minds. Each out-looker had a different opinion about the facts of each case. I have heard rather heated arguments, for instance, as to whether a certain man, unknown, was walking fast because he was going to a funeral or a wedding.

The change in the style of the women's dresses, since our incarceration, was a never-ending source of discussion. Some of the older women would gravely wag their heads, and give it as their positive conviction, that the world must be turning crook, entirely. How could a decent, respectable woman show her legs in public the way some of these free hussies were doing! Men couldn't be blamed, under the circumstances, if they became lustful. We noted the disappearance of fitted basques, and the apparent absence of corsets. As one old hag put it: "Religion or no religion, bastards must be on the increase."

The hospital was a long, beautiful ward. The bars did not interfere with vision. It was the only part of the prison which was fit for human habitation. How I wished I could stay there all the time I was in prison! I would have been willing to have my term extended, if, by doing so, I could escape from the horrible cell-life. We sick had an open fire which was protected from us by a locked screen.

But all of the people who came up that long road, we speedily observed, did not hasten, and did not dress in the new styles. They were shabby, and mostly old and decrepit. They, as we soon found out, were bound for the Poorhouse. It seemed that most of them dragged their weary feet along

the road, on this errand, at evening time. It was Summer, and the light held late. Almost every one of them carried a bundle, all that remained to them of this world's goods.

It was interesting to notice a couple, man and woman, probably husband and wife, approach us. When they got within haling-distance, they separated. Why? It did not take long to get to the bottom of this problem.

First, they would be separated anyhow. That was the rule, inflexible as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. Second, a "husband" would lead to embarrassing questions. Why didn't the husband support the wife? Where were the children? Why burden the community, with the expense of charity, if the applicant for relief was not lone and lorn? No, the old couple must not know each other. It would be better.

It was important, was this forethought. Neither of the pair could afford to risk being refused admission that night. Both were in need of lodging, with breakfast in the morning. They must disown each other, for the time being. Perhaps, better times would come to them.

They were probably honest and had worked hard all their lives. What bright prospects they once had and what hopes for the future! And it had come to this! Did they wish they had been crooks? Could the thief's fate be any worse than theirs?

In the morning, we could see the women cleaning and scrubbing. The men were chopping and sawing wood. There were the overseers to get the work done properly. Were the poor laborers hungry? They must have been. Notice how they line up, with every effort at speed, to get their breakfasts. The taskmaster was satisfied to pay the slaves, after their work was done. How much was their pay? What, no money? Only "free" bed and board.

Lloyd George did a good day's work when he put over the Old-age-pension Act. He clinched his argument, in the House of Commons, for the bill, in this fashion: In the Church of England Prayer-Book it says, "Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." The State now separates husband and wife at the Poorhouse gate. The old couples are not allowed, now, to have the comfort and companionship they are used to and need. Give them a pension, in their old age, and let them spend their last days together, in their own homes, no matter how poor, free of charity. The old spinsters, widows, bachelors and widowers are not allowed, now, to associate with their own friends. Pension them, so that old cronies may foregather and go down life's last road, in pleasant company, with their kind.

Is it any wonder crooks are crooks, under society as at present organized?

Across from the Poorhouse, stood the Prison morgue. As the death-rate in our colony was high, this half-way station to the grave had frequent passengers. The view from the hospital was splendid, but gruesome. Little as I feared death and much as I was used to it, in its more revolting forms, I had a horror of being buried from there, helpless to will otherwise. Some lawyer had told me, once, that there was no property right in a dead body.

Why I cared so particularly to be kept from the morgue is beyond me to explain. Like all crooks, I was superstitious.

Why is it I will not start an important undertaking on a Friday? Why do I have "hunches," which guide my conduct, often, when the argument is all against the hunch? Perhaps, it is intuition. Anyhow, that dead-house helped me to pull my time. I wouldn't die, no matter what punishment I had to take.

While a corpse was awaiting burial, two big, ugly, black cats, for some reason, or other, always kept vigil at the morgue door. They seemed to know when their services were needed, because they always appeared on the scene in advance of the stiff. Perhaps, they were kept at the morgue for a humanitarian purpose—to keep rats from feeding on the cadavers. The authorities might, at least, have provided less witch-like felines for that purpose. When the corpse actually arrived, an armed guard marched sentry, round and round the place, day and night. This, also, may have been to observe the proprieties, and guard against body-snatchers. In any event, the dead were still prisoners.

The building was a small, squat, two-story affair. Why it was necessary to have an upper floor, I never knew. Possibly the powers-that-be wanted to provide quarters for a coroner's jury. When the men came to hold the inquest, we were locked up, so that we could not see them. Likewise, we were always caged during the funeral, probably for the same reason, whatever it was.

But the prisoners were not to be denied their mournful pleasure, altogether. Surreptitiously, we would remove the little boxes which did duty for windows and ventilators. This gave us a broader, though inadequate, view. The trouble was that all of the windows did not give on the parade. I got most of my knowledge of these funerals from a hospital window. What a contrast to the way we buried our pals! We had the government beaten a mile in this respect. This was their procedure:

On signal being given, two old workhouse-men appeared, dressed in dilapidated, high silk-hats and old, torn black frock-coats. Invariably, they had some weeks' growth of beard. They drove an old nag, spavined and back-sunken,

attached to an old wagon, which, apparently, had been in the service of a green-grocer, but which had been raised to the dignity of a black coat-of-paint, as befitted its new occupation. Slowly, and laboriously, the drafted undertakers descended from the improvised hearse; slowly and solemnly they pulled a rough, unpainted pine-box out of the back of the wagon.

The door of the morgue opened and in went the old men with the box. A few minutes later, an oblong, black-draped thing came out, supported by two guards and the two "undertakers." The thing was heavier than the pine box which entered the death-chamber, too heavy for the old paupers alone to handle. Accompanying the black-thing were two wardresses and a nurse, with a bunch of wild flowers, which was thrown on top of the men's burden. There must be some sentiment about the affair, you know!

Up into the "hearse" hobbled the two poorhouse bums. Off they drove, like mad. Rattle her bones over the stones. They're only a convict's which nobody owns. The other prisoners cried all day. The officials said "Happy release—better off than in the outside world," etc. The Potters' Field is in the Chiltern Hills, famous for the celebrated case in Chancery.

On pleasant Summer evenings, the wardresses would take a walk out to the cemetery. Some of them, wanting, no doubt, to show their Christian spirit, would tell us how they knelt down on So-and-so's grave and prayed for her. Generally, these saints were the very ones who had been meanest with poor So-and-so when she was alive. Perhaps the bums felt conscience-stricken and were doing penance for their sins.

There was one particularly sad case of a Liverpool bar-

maid. She shot her seducer, who had aggravated his crime by giving the poor girl a disease. I shall not name her. She got a five-year sentence. She finished three years and some months of her stretch. The night before she was to have been discharged she hanged herself in her cell. Before the poor girl took the final leap, she wrote something on the slate which was derogatory to the prison management. We never knew the details, because the note was erased by a trusty before we would read it, but we were told enough to put us wise.

Of course there was gossip. Some said the deceased could not face the world, because the prison doctor had not treated her for her disease. My own opinion is that the big stiff did not know how to treat it, and it was allowed to run its course, thereby affecting her brain. Some of the matrons had taunted the poor girl for having the disease—just as if it was her fault she had contracted it! Her body was not claimed, so she was rattled up the hill.

As for that miserable morgue, I have only this to add: It was never cleaned by prisoners. If it ever did get cleaned, the work was done by the men-guards, or some poor old woman from the workhouse. There was too much prejudice against it on the part of the prisoners to risk even trying them at the job. We scrubbed and cleaned the penal-ward dungeons, but we would never go near the door of the death-house. We were never forced to do so; but we were compelled to scrub the stones on our hands and knees—yes, and even the filthy gateway of the prison.

One girl, Kitty Byron, made good after doing much less than her bit. She stabbed her lover to death, when she found out he wanted to be rid of her. She told me she never wanted to kill him, but only to frighten him. Unfortunately

she got him in a fatal spot. She was still young and got death.

As it happened, the public became interested in the poor girl, and the sentence was commuted to life. Finally, some ladies took up the matter, worked their heads off, and succeeded in having this deserving case sprung, after ten long years of imprisonment. The late Duchess of Bedford, and others, put Kitty into a training-school for nurses, and she went overseas when the War broke out. I saw her photograph in the uniform of a Red Cross nurse.

I laughed when I commenced my sentence; and I forced myself to joke all the way through it. There were times when I nearly lost my reason, but I never let myself go like some of the other, and more ignorant, girls did. The best way to describe me is that I was getting colder and colder, as the years rolled slowly by. I got just as cold and mean as the English themselves. When the War broke out, it gave me a great kick to learn that they were getting knocked off. I never asked any favors or received any, except what the poor girls themselves could give me. I reciprocated to the best of my ability. I was far more heartless the day I finished than I was when I commenced my prison bit.

You may ask why, then, I wanted to go straight, when I got out of jail before my time, by being deported. The answer is very simple. Crime hadn't paid me, to date. I had had enough of jail. I wouldn't risk going to prison again, if I could earn a decent living honestly.

CHAPTER XXIV

TITLED VISITORS AND VICTIMS

While I was in Aylesbury, many prominent people came to visit the jail, mostly with a sincere desire to benefit the inmates. Some of them got no farther than talk, generally in the shape of religious discourse and advice. A few used their eyes and ears, with the result that some reforms were introduced, but mighty few. If the truth must be told, the visitors tended to patronize the convicts, and the latter were inclined to grovel, hoping to get a grain of wheat out of a bushel of chaff. The prisoners generally owed their downfall to evil companions and wanted to get a chance to reform—and all such rot. On the whole the visitors kidded themselves more than they did us.

Among the prominent victims in the jail, was the Countess de Bournville, who was charged with being a spy. It was said she carried lights over London roofs, to guide German airplanes to bomb the House of Commons. If she did, I couldn't hate her for that.

The beautiful Bertha Wertheim died of a broken heart in the prison, as a result of her troubles and the way she was treated. Her sweetheart died in the Tower of London.

Countess Constance Markievicz, was the Irish lady who was imprisoned for her share in the Irish uprising in Dublin the week beginning Easter Monday, April 24, 1916. The English did everything they could to humiliate her, but she

was Irish to the back-bone and they had no success. If anything, it was the other way round.

She was the grandest woman I ever met. No kind of hardship ever feazed her. We were great friends and I always took her part, when the Englishers tried to ride her. You would wonder how convicts could be so patriotic! I think it was in 1923 that I met the Countess in the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel and the Academy of Music, Philadelphia. As soon as her eye lit on me, she left the people she was talking to and ran over to me and kissed me. We had quite a long chat, to the amazement of the swells, who did not know who I was.

The list of notable prisoners is quite long. Among others, were Lady Carewe, who poisoned her husband, the Consul, in Yokohama, and got life; Mrs. Mason, who tried to kill Lloyd George, and Mrs. Edith Leslie, a con-woman, who solicited investments by pretending to be on the inside with J. Pierpont Morgan.

I think it was when the Germans were making their last big successful push, and General Haig was telling the English Tommies that their backs were against the wall, and they would have to fight, that the prisoners were ordered to go to the Anglican Chapel to pray for the success of the troops.

I knew the rules, and I knew they could not force me to go. I slammed my door shut. The Irish Countess and the German spy, Bertha, would not go. For spite, they made the three of us women carry enough gruel around the prison to feed the entire three hundred convicts.

We had to carry immense, heavy cans, up winding stairs. While we were doing this, the Countess recited long passages, in Italian, from Dante's "Inferno." The place looked like Hell, all right, with the lights dimmed and musty-smelling

bags tacked across the windows, as a precaution against bombing.

Mr. Butler was the Protestant chaplain, and a fine Irish parson he was, too. He was always boosting the Irish. When we would have a concert, he wanted songs about Erin. He would have quite a time getting them, because most of the prisoners did not want to sing them. He sometimes spoke in the hall to his country-women, so that everybody could hear. He talked a lot about the War, and told us the English had taken some of their troops away from the dear old Emerald Isle.

"You know we can guard our own little mossy banks," said he, one day.

I grinned to myself. When I got a chance, I whispered to Gleason, "If they take the troops away, our people are going to make one more attempt to free themselves." In less than a month, I proved myself a good prophet.

About the first year I was in this English Bastile, General Booth came to preach to us. We all brought out our stools, and nearly three hundred women sat out in the front-yard, within the gates. The old gentleman spoke from his car. Some of the poor old women, doing life, had not been outside, perhaps, for fifteen or twenty years. The tears were streaming down their pale faces; and he exhorted them, among other things, to ask their priests or ministers to help them when they left the jail. The younger women started to laugh.

The old fellow must have understood, for he paused an instant, and said, "Come to me, then. Come to the Salvation Army."

In those days, the "Army" was not classy as it is now. It has come to be like some of the churches.

One of Booth's captains, Gypsy Smith, knew me, and whispered to the General about me. When he had finished his address, he wanted to see and talk to me. Among other things, he said he was very sorry for me, and told me he would try to get a pardon for me from the King, after I had done a few years. Unfortunately, the good soul died in about a couple of years; and, of course, Mr. W. Bramwell Booth, his son, was not interested.

Several prominent men I had known, out in the world, visited the prison while I was there. When the famous Scotch lawyer, Sir George Lewis called on us, I had quite a long conversation with him. Nothing came of it. Perhaps he lost his notes about my case. Sir Arthur Reynolds, whom I knew before he got the handle to his name, promised to aid me, but I never heard that he ever tried to keep his promise. Perhaps he did, and failed to get results.

I think I would have had my sentence reduced if Winston Churchill had remained Home Secretary. He left office before I had finished five years. I couldn't bring myself to petition, formally, against my unjust sentence. When the Duchess of Bedford came to see us, she told me I did not have a ghost of a chance for a pardon, because the men at the Home Office were all against me.

Mrs. Strathcona, who sang to the soldiers in the camps in France, entertained us at Aylesbury before she started for the front. At one of the concerts we had Lady Beerbohm Tree, who sang for us and favored us with many encores.

Lady Speyer played the violin for us. She was an American, and her husband was a German who had been knighted by the English. During the World War, however, he surrendered his title, and went to live with his wife, as a plain "Mister," in one of the Western States. She came to my cell

and paid personal visits to Gleason and myself. The guards left her alone with me for some time. She was very sorry for both Gleason and me.

Of course, we had visits from the higher-ups from the Home Office. When they came, we were all locked up. They were afraid that some of the lifers, who had been refused reductions of sentences, might make it a personal matter and stab or otherwise injure those who were responsible for turn-downs. Convicts are the easiest people in the world to get excited.

I remember, just before the Americans came to the rescue of the English, the authorities took away all the men who could do anything at all, and drafted them. The poor women had to do the men's work, even to digging up the drains when the sewerage-system would break down. We were very near the breaking-point, what with lack of food and laborious work. Some of those poor women had sons and brothers at the front. It was tough!

When things were at their worst, as far as the prison morale was concerned, the Catholic Bishop came to give us a sermon. He pitched on a very unfortunate theme—"Work." He was a grand orator, standing there well-fed, fat, and smug, in his beautiful robes, with his gold chain and ring of office.

He simply roared out, "Work, work, and pray while you work! You women in the laundry, pray, pray, while you work!"

There were mutterings among the North-country dames. They are not so easy to cow as the Southerners.

The mutterings grew louder. The matrons smelt a rat, and began to stir. Something was about to be doing. I don't know whether the Bishop took a tumble of his own accord or

the actions of the matrons had put him wise. In any event, he made a hurried peroration which switched from the first subject of his talk—and exit. It would not have taken much to have set that crowd off. A riot was in the making.

At another time, the same Bishop had to pull off a spiel about Hell. Just as if we didn't have practical experience of that place!

Once this individual came into the twine-room, where I was working. All the Catholic girls fell on their knees. He went the rounds, and they kissed his ring.

When he came to me, the wardess said, "Lord Bishop, here is a girl who is a Catholic, or ought to be one."

After I had finished the ball of string, I was working on, I looked up at this well-fed churchman and said, "Good afternoon," still keeping on, turning the crank.

"Were you baptized a Catholic?", inquired he.

"Sure," said I; "but I'm not to blame for that."

"Oh, dear me," says he, taking out his book to pray, "there's a warp in her nature, somewhere."

Afterwards, however, he and I became great friends. I pointed out to him some of his errors of judgment in delivering his sermons, for which he thanked me. He came on a special visit to see Countess Markievicz and me, and said a special mass for me. I did my ten years all the same.

Among other visitors, I had the pleasure, in jail, of meeting Miss Vanderveld, sister of the Belgian Socialist leader, who was a Count in his country. She was a great kidder, but was only interested in soiled doves—Borstal girls. Borstal was a philanthropist who gave money to establish two reformatories—one for boys and the other for girls—first offenders. I think Miss Van was of the opinion that our crew was composed of dirty pigeons.

At all events, she might have been right, if she thought there was less chance to reform us than there was to remake the Borstal children. You can't teach an old dog new tricks. If the iron of prison does not enter your soul, and sear it, there is a chance for a cure. If it does, the case is almost always hopeless.

One Sister of Charity, who surely deserved the name, came to work with us. She was Sister Gertrude, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk. Her first prison-work was at Holloway Jail. Of course, most of the girls told her they were innocent. She was very indignant at the Government for making so many mistakes and locking up so many people, wrongfully. I don't know how many remonstrances she had filed before it could be proved that most of her informants were liars.

She had great family influence, and she kicked up quite a rumpus for a while, worrying the officials who had to go to the trouble to show her. This was one of her first essays in home missionary work.

Then she fell into another trap. When it came time to go out, the ladies who had got next to her told her they wanted to go home to rehabilitate themselves, now that she had shown them the way to better and nobler lives. Most of them wanted to go to the North of England, or the North of Scotland, or the West of Wales, or the West of Ireland. Some even wanted to go to America, Canada, Australia, and God knows where. Anything to get a big wad of money for transportation.

The poor dear child fell for it for a long while. She discovered at last, however, that the very big majority of the recipients of her bounty had never been out of London in their lives—and were back in jail again in a few weeks'

time. She spent her fortune before she got wise to all of the tricks of the underworld.

I know this because she told me so herself. She said she had no money left, whatever. I suppose people think nuns never have any money. Sister Gertrude had her own private fortune. I don't know how much she brought to the church.

CHAPTER XXV

PRISON SCHOOLS

There is nothing like a prison for reading, writing, study, and contemplation—after work is done. Meals do not take long. There is nothing else to do. The question of dress and the arrangement of the toilet is a very minor consideration. To deprive a prisoner of reading matter and writing material is the refinement of cruelty. It puts him at the same disadvantage as the prisoner who cannot read, or write. He can only think. I know, from my own experience, that the more ignorant the convict, the harder it is for him to endure confinement. The one who cannot find exercise for his mind, outside of himself, is the one who is liable to go crazy.

I had heard the old parish priest tell my mother that the Old Testament was not fit for a young girl to read. This was when I was at home, before I ran away and turned out to be a professional crook. It was not until I was a prisoner in St. Lazare, France, however, that I got an opportunity to read that particularly interesting book. Then, when I had nothing better to do, and I got hold of a St. James version, I seized the opportunity. The priest was right. It is not in the style of Boccaccio's "Decameron" or Balzac's "Les Contes Drôlatiques," but it has its points. I have read all of them, and I have read the whole Bible through a couple of times. Present day men have nothing on some of the Old Testament Johns for dirt.

In Aylesbury Prison, England, there was a schoolmistress and a library. In addition, Mr. Butler, the Protestant chaplain, an Irishman, and Father Scott, the Catholic chaplain, who was formerly a minister of the Church of England, and the Reverend Thompson, another Protestant chaplain, were very kind, lending the prisoners books from their own private libraries. The schoolmistress was a Miss Overmas, who was a highly educated lady in reduced circumstances. I became very friendly with her. She knew I was very broadminded in my religious views, but they often shocked her.

"Poor Churchill," said she to me one day, with tears in her eyes, "I must have a chat with the priest about you."

"Thanks, awfully," I replied, "but please don't bother yourself about me, for I do not care for priest or bishop, king or pope. They mean nothing in my young life."

In spite of such talk as this, the good soul liked me just the same. Sometimes she would call me and say:

"Churchill, I believe you have read most, or the greater part, of the books in our library. What do you think of different authors with regard to their writings against the Roman Church? I have to be very careful what books I give our Catholic girls."

She was very conscientious, and did not want to hurt their feelings. She had an assistant, a prisoner, who was supposed to put two books a week into each cell. Sometimes this girl, being in a hurry, made a mistake and put inappropriate books into some of the cells. She did not do this on purpose, or for the propaganda of any particular faith. Her judgment was not always good.

In general, I told Miss Overmas that all of the books were good for me, and I thought most of them were safe for the others, with the exception of Hawkins. He did lambaste the

Popes, and I wanted to be perfectly honest in my reports to her.

I used to borrow books from the other girls on my tier. In that way, I used to read as many as one book a day instead of two a week. The longer you were in prison, the better the books became. They had a system of giving out the oldest and most uninteresting volumes first and holding the newer and more interesting ones as a reward for good conduct, and to encourage the flagging spirits of the women inmates. But like fashions, the best books in the library were at least seven years out of date.

Daily newspapers or magazines were taboo, unless they were strictly religious or reformative in character. Whenever I could, especially when I was first penned up, I would borrow books from girls who had been living in the jail for at least ten years. Many of them had lost most of their ambition to read, though they were given the better and more interesting books.

We worked about eight hours a day, and were locked up for the night about 4 P. M. From then on, to about 10 o'clock, was our time to read. I used to pull my cot under the hole that was my ventilator and window, and read until the light would fade away. In the Summer time, the light would linger until about bedtime. In the Winter, we had gas burning outside of a glass window which looked into the corridor. I would pull my stool to the wooden table, fastened to the wall. With a book on the table, I would read until the lights went out.

During the dinner hour, at noon, it did not take more than a few minutes to eat all that was doled out to us. I would spend the rest of the time reading. Unless it was my turn to clean the gateway, or carry food or scrub tiers, at

which the women took turns, I would get all of Saturday afternoon for reading.

Strange as it may seem, Sunday was the hardest day of all for the readers. What between "meals" and having to go to church twice, the interruptions were very annoying. I used to take a book with me to church; and, then, I didn't care how long the sermon lasted. Of course, I wasn't supposed to be reading, but to be listening. I had to make a bluff, as if I was reading the chapter from which the text was taken. The supervision in this respect was not very close.

It is surprising, even to me, how much reading I accomplished and what a wide variety of subjects I covered, considering the meagerness of my sources. I read everything I could get my hands on, good, bad, and indifferent, from Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" and D'Aubigné's "History of the Reformation" to "Alice in Wonderland" and Grimm's "Fairy Tales."

It is unbelievable that I waded through Mommsen's "Roman History," not because it was heavy-going, but because it was a comparatively recent book for the prison to have. I am not sure but what one of the sky-pilots lent it to me. I know I tried to borrow Suetonius from one of them, and was told it was not the sort of a book for me to read. Even "Quo Vadis" was denied me, though I urged that it dealt with the introduction of the Christian religion.

All of the classical novelists were mine for the asking, if I did not ask for more than my allotment of two a week: Brontë, Elliot, Fielding, Thackeray, Scott, Dickens, Hawthorne, Emerson and dozens more. "The Scarlet Letter" seemed to be one of the books which the dear old-maid school-mistress was fond of shoving at every newcomer. I

reveled in Dickens, especially Oliver Twist, and the parts in other of his books about crooks and lawyers. The experiences of Sam Weller's old man with the shyster-lawyer, who pretended to have pull with the judges and had no pull at all, except for petty graft, was a scream.

I read all of Shakespeare and got so that I would make believe I was acting the parts, in imitation of what I had seen on the stage when I used to go to the play, occasionally, to see a great actor and pick up a John. There were volumes of British Poets and "High Lights of History" and "Epochal Events" and "Good Deeds" and what not—I devoured all of them.

Burns and Tom Moore were my favorite poets. The one socked Church, State, and hypocrites; the other was the sentimental lover of his Green Isle and its people; both talked about every-day things in every-day language. For some reason, I was not allowed to read Marie Corelli's novels until near the end of my time.

At first, the chaplains were afraid to lend me books, because they were very careful about dealing with women outside of their respective churches. I have to thank Miss Overmas for urging them to give me as much leeway as possible, in this matter. An American woman, a Mrs. Leslie, gave the prison Hamsworth's "Self-Educator," two volumes; and stipulated that I was to have the first use of it, before it was passed on to the other girls. The chaplains used to make calls at supper-time, sometimes, to see if the prisoners had their own books, and if any library-book was torn. I only know of one case where there was a report; and then the girl was merely reprimanded. She did not lose any time from her good-behavior record.

One night, in the Winter, when the dark comes on shortly

after 3 o'clock in England, we were hurrying from the shops to get some hot cocoa. We smelt something burning. Somehow or other Amy Walters, an Irish girl, had been given Hawkins' most anti-Catholic book to read. It was all a mistake. She was a very devout church member. She stole a match and tried to make a bonfire of the book, right in front of the desk on the ground floor of the prison. After a lot of laughing and jeering about the fire, and the book, the incident passed. Amy was not punished, though the possession of a match was a heinous offense.

Nobody had a right to give a book like that to such a crazy fanatic as Walters. Some of the educated women-prisoners, like Lady Carewe, would pencil in the books such things as "lies," "positively no," etc.; but they read such books and would give them back without further comment, undamaged.

This same book by Hawkins got me into a great controversy with Father Scott. It had convinced me that certain things I had heard about the Roman Church selling the Irish out, to the English, were correct. The priest said something to me one day about Judas betraying Christ for thirty pieces of silver. I told him that was no worse than the Pope betraying the Irish for Peter's pence.

He said it wasn't so. I told him I could prove it, only he wouldn't listen to the likes of me. This must have appealed to the sense of fairness of the poor old fellow; because he said to me, "Daughter, I will listen to anything you have to say about the matter, if it does not take too long, and if you will listen to me for the same length of time." No sooner said than done. This is the gist of what I told him:

In the reign of Henry II., a Norman, there was an English Pope, named Adrian, whose secular name was Nicholas

Breakspeare. The two of them were personal friends. At that time, most of the civilized world was Roman Catholic. Among the exceptions were the Celts in Ireland, Wales and Scotland, who were Christians, known as Culdees, or Servants of God.

They got their religion from St. Patrick, St. Columbkill, and St. Malachy. You never see the last two names in a Roman calendar. St. Bride is the only other Irish name, besides St. Patrick, which is in such a publication. In fact, St. Patrick wasn't an Irishman at all. He was born on the coast of Dumbarton, Scotland, and got part of his education in Normandy.

This Pope struck a bargain with this King. The King was to collect Peter's pence for the Pope, and the Pope was to send English priests to reform the wild, insubordinate Irish. First came the Roman priests; then came the English settlers. They formed the pale and introduced the English language.

When they got stronger the Sassenachs, backed up by the Pope and King, after much fighting, grabbed a lot of the rich land round Limerick. Before this raid, the Irish Culdee Christians had their own monasteries, schools and churches, feeding their poor and educating their children. Their religion was like that of the early Christians before Rome embroidered it.

After the sell-out, a bunch of Wops were sent to Ireland to do the collecting, envoys-extraordinary of His Holiness. When they got up to Tharnawoghuey bog, they were held up by the O'Gleasons, who stole the Peter's pence they had collected, and all their gold and silver chains and trappings.

There were Christians in both Great Britain and Ireland before the arrival of the Saxons. St. Augustine was sent to

christianize the heathen Saxons. After he accomplished this, the Saxons tried to pull the wool over the eyes of the Culdees. There was a great ecclesiastical conference, which ended in nothing, because the two groups couldn't agree on the same dates for Easter, Good Friday, and Christmas, to say nothing of various other important points of difference.

I was out of breath, for I had given Father Scott a mouthful. He smiled indulgently and had very little to say in reply. He wanted to know where I got the big idea. I told him out of Hawkins and Jefferson.

He said, "I am afraid a little learning has made you mad. Half-truths are very misleading. The Culdees did not exist until the ninth century, and St. Patrick died in the fifth century. A little bit of learning is a dangerous thing. You don't know how much you have to know in order to know how little you know."

But I don't think he answered my argument. If it wasn't the Culdees, it was some other group of Christians. I am sure about St. Augustine and the Saxons coming after the time of St. Patrick and his fellow workers. The Irish people owe their bondage for 700 years to Rome, because they were sold by Rome to England.

In this connection, I might add that I read an ecclesiastical history by Father O'Reilly, of Toronto, Canada, published some sixty years ago. One time I read "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," by Father Chiniquy, also a Canadian. I did not agree with all this backslider said, but, I thought, he ought to be allowed to say it. I have heard that his book disappears from public libraries, which, I think, is a poor way to combat error.

My grandfather was a good Christian but was not very strong on the dogmas of his church. He had little time for a

priest, unless he proved himself a good man. For the same reason, he had no use for Presbyterian tenets, but he admired the Reverend Best, who preached powerful sermons about the Red Whore of Babylon, seated on seven hills, which was supposed to be Rome, as set forth in Revelations. Best was a Derry man, so, of course, he couldn't help it. He was a good man. Our parish priest couldn't persuade Grandfather that our friend, the pastor, was going to Hell. If all the Irish were like those two old gazabos, there wouldn't be any North and South in the island.

Anyhow, I heard my grandfather say, many a time, that it was the priests who sold us to the Sassenachs. I suppose I take after him. I also know, in the famine, when the United States sent over relief ships, the priests told the Irish peasants not to plant potatoes, because there was a blight which would prevent them from maturing. Most of them took the advice, but not so the old gent. He planted as usual, took special care, and had a bigger and better yield than usual. That's that!

CHAPTER XXVI

GLEASON AND LYONS—CONTRASTS

Of all the crooks I have met, in the course of my long career, no woman ever made a bigger impression on me than the wife of Mickey Gleason, the safe blower. She was always my friend, was Annie, and we worked and suffered together. An expert in her line, and deserving of the greatest success, many of the breaks went against her, and they were costly ones. I, less talented than she, in our respective parts of the profession, was more fortunate. If Fate had been more just, perhaps, our situations would have been reversed. I did not deserve more good fortune than Annie.

Annie came out of the West about the time we were robbing the American Express office in Paris. She was the most beautiful girl that ever lived, just a simple little girl, the daughter of an Irish washerwoman and a Flemish father. No painter could have done justice to the perfect beauty of that young woman. Her husband died some years ago in London. He was in prison in Munich during the World War, and died on his way back to his native land. He also came from the Chicago bad lands, a pal of Eddie Guerin.

How time changes conditions! At the height of their careers, Mickey made one touch which netted him forty thousand dollars. He and Annie gave a banquet to the swell crooks in the Plaza Hotel, New York. When the management saw the elaborate scale on which everything was being

ordered, and the number of guests which were to attend, they got nervous about the payment of their bill and spoke to the Gleasons about it. Mickey, like a lord, took the manager to the hotel-safe and got out his package which had been left there as a precaution. That manager's eyes nearly popped out of his head when he was shown about a hundred thousand dollars in cash, to say nothing of the wife's jewels. They were a thrifty pair personally. But their own liberality, a host of parasites, and the law more than offset their efforts to save for a rainy day.

In different places in this book, I have occasion to speak of Annie Gleason. I am going to enlarge, here, on some particular events in her life.

Annie was an expert pennyweighter; that is, one who was familiar with the weight, size, and color of gems, and could appraise them instantly and carry the details in her mind. When it became necessary, she would buy, or have inferior or artificial duplicate-gems made, and would switch the artificial for the genuine ones. In this way she could cover a theft under the nose of the smartest dealers and usually make her getaway. Very few men or women were her equal at this. It was a gift. She might have made a good living if she had exercised her talents in the employ of a jeweler.

It was Annie who engineered the plan to steal the Duchess of Sutherland's jewels. Everything was prepared to make the substitution and steal the noble lady's valuable heirlooms. She was trailed to the Holy Land and back. Money and time were wasted, by the crooks, but opportunity never offered.

It was not until the party returned to London that the chance came, and then it developed into an ordinary sneak-job, and the chief of the expedition did not get the profit or

glory. The owner put her jewel-case down for a minute. There was a chance commotion, and Harry-the-Valet Johnson simply grabbed it during the confusion and disappeared. Audacity won where skill and finesse had failed.

It may be interesting to know what followed. The Valet had a girl, Maude Richardson, a stool. She sent many a poor simp to jail. Harry confided in her about the Duchess's gems. Nothing would do but she must wear them to a Covent Garden Ball. He refused, but compromised by giving her a beautiful diamond ring, out of the lot. He sold the rest of the loot to Kemmie Goldberg, a fence.

Maude was sweet on a bull in Scotland Yard. She told him how she got the ring, and what she knew about the robbery. Poor Johnson was arrested, convicted, and given five years. He would have got more but for the fact that they could not tie more than the ring on him. The rest had disappeared. His alibi, if that is what it might be called, was that he had nothing to do with the robbery, and had bought the ring from a man in a public house. He had a barman corroborate his story.

This goes to show that there are women stools who make a good living off crooks and take what they can get. When the fall comes, and often before, they tip off the authorities and frequently give evidence. Some of them do not run a long race. They are put out of commission.

In a hotel room in Liverpool, the robbery of a five thousand pound necklace was planned by Harry Bennett and Baby Thompson. They got Annie Gleason to pose, in London, as the niece of General Grant and do the pennyweight trick. First they got a carriage from a high-class livery stable, and supplied a coachman and footman.

Annie drove in state to Christie's in Bond Street, several

times, to look at the pearls, but she could not make up her mind to buy them. Then she went to the Parisian Diamond Company in Regent Street and bought a pearl necklace for five pounds. After that, she strung and matched the cheap jou-jous, so as to look like the real thing. She got a trade-tab which appeared to be exactly like the ones Christie used.

When the time came to pull off the trick, Mrs. Gleason walked boldly into the store, from her carriage, with all the nerve and savoir faire which is characteristic of Americans in every adventure. Here she was, in the most exclusive shop then in Europe! It was full of duchesses and countesses and aristocrats, with detectives and uniformed cops walking round. Annie pushed her way in as if she were the old general going on to Richmond.

The shopman opened the case and produced the necklace. In the twinkle of an eye, the duds were substituted for the beauties. She handed the fakes back to the clerk, after carefully examining them, saying her husband would be in London the next day, and she would decide upon buying them after she had had a talk with him. On the way out, Annie met Bennett on the stairs. He had a date to meet her at the Bond Street Post Office. But the yellow-streaked Englishman tarried to see what happened after Gleason got out.

The robbery was noticed almost immediately, and Bennett got cold feet and did not keep his appointment. He told me, years afterwards, that he could not afford to take a chance for a thousand pounds, but he didn't care about poor Annie. The fence was to pay half-price for the string, Bennett and Gleason were to get a thousand pounds each; and Thompson five hundred.

A man named Davis, a jewelry merchant, happened to be in Christie's and saw the incident. When Annie left the counter, he stepped over, purely out of curiosity, and examined the pearls she had been looking at. The first thing his eye lit on was the tag. It was white instead of buff. Immediately, he called the clerk's attention to that, and told him the necklace had been switched.

There was a big commotion in the store, and the clerk described the American lady. One of the page-boys heard all about it.

Shortly thereafter, the boy was at the post office, to deliver packages, and Annie was there, looking for Bennett. Getting tired of waiting for him, she had just called a cab and was getting into it. The sharp young man spotting her, cried out, "There's the lady who stole the necklace!" She tried to make a break, and hid the pearls in a doorway, where they were afterwards found.

She was arrested, tried, found guilty, and sentenced. As the dicks did not have her record, at that time, she, fortunately, got only three years in Aylesbury. She was on her way out the day I commenced my sentence.

But four years after that who walked into Aylesbury but poor Annie Gleason! She had gone shoplifting with a notorious Russian Count. They only stole a Panama hat and some silk stockings. He got five years and ten lashes of the cat and she got five years. As good behavior cut down the time to three years she left me again in prison.

While she was there with me I warned her to get out of the country. Strange as it may seem, she was not deported either time she got the jolt. But one month after she left, for the second time, she was back again, with a ten-year sentence and the ticket of leave from the other five, which

was thirteen months. It would be about seven years and five months before she would be free again. This last time I left her in jail.

On this last occasion, Annie was tripped for enticing an old Russian Jew, who had a private jewelry shop in Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road. She had an apartment in the Savoy Mansions, the same apartment where Billie Carleton committed suicide the night of the Victory Ball, several years later.

She had the proper "credentials" for the jeweler. Hadn't she bought a little diamond ring from him for twenty-seven pounds! The old codger was an expert in his line. He had made jewelry for the ex-Kaiser and also for Franz Joseph, of Austro-Hungary.

Annie told him some lord kept her and was going to buy her a lot of diamonds. She asked him to bring a good assortment round to her to pick from. Along came the dealer, in due course, with about twenty thousand pounds' worth of beautiful wares.

He was met by two Russian thugs who sandbagged him. Annie wasn't even there. One Tartar was footman, dressed like a page, to attend to the door. An old man, an American crook from Chicago, named Charlie Allen, a friend of Guerin, was outside man.

Along came Scotland Yard and found a lady's silk handkerchief in the bureau drawer. They traced poor Annie via the laundry mark, the laundry, and a little girl who knew the beautiful handkerchief as one belonging to "Mrs. Ferguson." The police dropped on her just as she and old Allen were preparing to leave. They tore the place to pieces looking for the jewelry, but they never found it.

The Russians disappeared with the diamonds. They

weren't merely after the tray of sparks. They wanted the Jew's keys to his safe, where there was a fortune in diamonds, rubies, and antique stones.

The old bozo testified on the stand that the reason they did not get the safe-openers was because he changed his pants that day, which was unusual, forgot his keys, and left them in his working-clothes.

After Annie had done a couple of months at Aylesbury on account of this affair, the dicks visited her and promised her years off her time if she would tell them the names of the other men who got away.

One of the matrons tempted her with, "You are a damned fool if you don't tell. Otherwise, you won't be able to get any of the stuff when you get through here."

But Annie only said, "Oh, one of their wives is going to have a baby." She wouldn't have squealed anyhow.

Poor old Allen was condemned to twelve years and ten strokes of the cat, which last was not given him on account of his age and health. He died in a few years. Some twenty years before, he had made his escape from Joliet Prison, Illinois, on a Thanksgiving Day.

I never saw Annie Gleason again. I left her working in Aylesbury. I heard she died in Liverpool after they moved the women there. I heard again that she was in Auburn, New York.

Why do I talk so much about Annie? She was my friend, and I admired her. She was clever and beautiful, and never got any credit for either. I, who was a second-rater in both respects, was always in the public eye, in the press, and on the police blotter. Poor Annie made herself too cheap by being a good fellow. I always made the mob think I was above them, even when broke. She, like myself, paid

for what she got. We were no worse than other thieves. Only she was more unlucky than most of us.

Of the hundreds of crooks I have known, there was only one outstanding success. I refer to Sophie Lyons. She died from the effects of a brutal beating; but she died rich. All the rest have died poor. There are some old ones still living, or who were living when I last heard of them, who are apparently making a good income. I'll bet my life to a cent, however, that they go the way of the big majority, unless they mend their ways. There seems to be a fatality about the way money runs through a thief's fingers as if it were water.

I first met Sophie Lyons at a party in the Savoy Hotel, London, about twenty-eight years ago. She was then a very clever little lady. I knew her husband, Billy Burke, back in the West, and also her first husband, Mike Lyons, the pickpocket. Guerin was invited to the party, but would not go. He wanted me to meet her, conceal a piece of my jewelry in her dress, and then have her arrested, searched, and punished. I refused, and we had a fight.

The reason for his attitude towards Sophie was, as I remark elsewhere, that he accused her of having him sent to prison for the Lyons robbery. He said she was disappointed at not getting a cut out of the swag, as a member of the gang. This wasn't so, but nothing could persuade Eddie otherwise.

One time, she and I compared notes and found that we had occupied the same cot in the St. Lazare Prison-Hospital, France. While I was there, the doctor told me about a rich Australian lady having occupied the same bed as I did. When I asked him, he gave me a description of the person, and I knew it was Sophie, immediately. In the

course of the conversation with her, years afterward, I described the bed, its location, surroundings, etc., and the doctor. We verified the coincidence. I asked her how she came to get into St. Lazare, and this is what she told me:

She and some of her gang pulled off a big job in Paris. As was the custom, the loot was divided; and each member of the party went his own way with his share. Sophie had the lion's portion and was ablaze with her own diamonds. She was followed by two *apachés,* who evidently knew who she was. When she was going through a side street, the thugs pushed her into an alley and into a doorway.

Sophie came to her senses in a cellar, where a janitor found her, dressed in rags. They had taken everything she had on her. She was arrested and sent to prison as a vagabond. She had to tell the dicks a story which was absolutely untrue, because circumstances compelled her, at that time, to hide her identity.

Sophie was taken sick, as a result of exposure and her treatment, and was sent to the hospital. When she started to convalesce, she told the doctor that she was wealthy and asked him to send a letter for her to her friends in London. She had enough put into the letter so that the gangster who received it tumbled at once. The doctor sent the letter.

To the surprise of the hospital and prison-officials, back came five hundred dollars and some clothes, in short order. They stopped sneering at her and calling her "The Princess in Rags." Instead of that, everybody suddenly became very nice, and kowtowed to her. Sophie spent the money among them, and the government released her forthwith. Such is the power of the almighty dollar.

I was talking to Sophie in her little home in Detroit not long before she died. She was alone, dressed in a cotton dress. She had found religion; but she had not forgiven Guerin for the report he had spread about her squealing on him. Her religion could not stomach the falseness of the stool-pigeon charge. She referred to him as a double-dyed villain.

I remonstrated with her, saying I could forgive him, because I thought he was not altogether sane and was the victim of hallucinations. But she would not change her mind about him, justifying her attitude by the fact that it was before he had had to endure the horrors of Devil's Island, and the escape from that hell-hole, that he had lied so about her. She said, in her opinion, it was the unforgivable sin mentioned in the Bible.

I knew she had sent money and clothes to Annie Gleason, so that she could come home from the English prison. I asked her if she knew the whereabouts of my lovely Annie. "No, if you mean the woman who was a laundress or something in Chicago," said Mrs. Lyons. Well, of all things! I knew that Annie Gleason was the daughter of a washerwoman; but why in thunder did the old cat put it that way? She had found God, all right, and she surely was religious.

I said to her, "Aren't you very lonesome, here, all alone?"

She raised her eyes to heaven, which the French call the ceiling, and answered, "How can I be alone, when the Lord is here with me?"

Sophie was so old, weird, and sanctimonious-looking, sitting there dressed up in old-fashioned clothes, that I was glad to say good-by, get out into the clear, crisp air, jump

into my guy's car, and drive myself home to my warm, comfortable apartment. That was the last I saw of her.

I read of her death in the papers. She was rich and was always befriending crooks. Many of them grafted on her. One night some of them must have made demands on her in a Greek restaurant, which she refused, or else it was plain robbery. She had her gloves on, and they did not get her rings. The result of the beating, on this occasion, brought her to her death-bed, weeks afterwards. But, she would not prosecute.

She was a wonderful woman, and I really think her reformation was on the level. At the same time, however, I think she had bats in her belfry.

Some big judge handles the money for the Sophie Lyons Foundation, a very worthy charity.

CHAPTER XXVII

MY SECOND DEPORTATION

I had been deported from France to England, after pardon and release, from French prisons. Now came the time when I was to be deported from England to the United States, of which I was a citizen, though Irish born, because of having married two Americans.

I was in bed in the hospital-ward, in Aylesbury Prison, one very cold day, about the end of March, 1917. It was snowing. The doctor told me to get ready to go to the city-prison, Holloway, adding that I was to be deported. Sick as I was, I hastened to comply; for any change was welcome, in the face of what I had been enduring. One gets that way after being in one jail for ten years.

I was accompanied to London by two matrons, and I was dressed in the old, dirty prison-garb. People thought I was going to a lunatic asylum. I was very sick, laughing and crying in turn.

The governor of Holloway treated me all right. I got a clean room by paying for it. As I spent a penny a day for extra food, I did not have much to spare. After about two weeks, a man came with my ticket and passport. I was to sail on the American Line, by the S. S. Philadelphia.

He said, "Hello, May! You look fine." I thought he was a ship-agent, and American; so I sat down opposite to him, very friendly-like. After joking with me for a while,

he said, "I am Simpson, a Scotland Yard Agent, who looks after deportees." When I heard this, I ups on my feet, and said, "Pardon me! I didn't know you were a dick." He got very red, but pretended to be amused.

All arrangements were made to meet me at the big gate the next morning. I was dressed in long, thick flannels, with long sleeves; a linsey petticoat, under a serge skirt, trailing on the ground, and a basque. The dresses worn in every-day life, in that year of grace, were almost as short as they are now. In addition to this rig, I had a heavy plaid shawl, with brogues, knitted stockings and a calico chemise. The shawl was fastened with a safety pin on the side; and the black straw bonnet had ribbons, which the matron took good care to tie at the side. A Bible and prayer-book were handed me, with instructions to carry them under my arm.

Bull Simpson, and another bull, who had been a witness against me at the trial, received me in custody, at the gate. I could have killed the latter, out of hand, if I had the chance. What does this skunk do, first thing, but yap, "Blimey! A bit battered, but still in the ring." First, they took me to the little police-station, where I was tried the night that Smith shot Guerin, ten years before.

Simpson treated me fairly well. After eating, which I paid for out of my few pennies, I was taken to Liverpool, accompanied by Simpson and his wife. I was too dangerous to be trusted with men, alone. I was glad of her company. She was a nice young woman, quite different from a snuffy old matron, who would have been lecturing me, all the way, to be a good woman, as if I could be anything else in the rig I had on.

The train was crowded with soldiers. At first, they were inclined to be fresh. One kid pushed me, and I promptly

handed him a kick on the shins with my heavy shoes. Simpson "told them off," and I had no more trouble.

A French girl in Holloway Prison-yard, gave me an old dress-suit case and a nice warm coat, lined with fur. When we were nearing Liverpool, I managed to toss the plaid shawl, hat, Bible and prayer-book out of the coach-window, shocking the bull and his wife.

At our destination, I went to the Bridewell, while my keepers put up at a hotel. About 10 A. M., the next day, I had to go to police-headquarters for all the Liverpool dicks to take a look at me. Then I was turned over to a city bull, a nice young fellow, who took me through the immigration office. Passing the red-tape there, we ran into sailors, from China and other foreign ports, going home to join the American Navy. The United States was now at war. The officials did not say I was an ex-convict. I was labeled a deportee.

I assure you, I was glad to get a square meal. The Liverpool bull introduced me to the chief-steward, saying, like the gentleman he was, "I say, old top! Please make this lady a cup of tea, don't you know. She has had a very strenuous day—and fix her up a cabin." The dirty Home Office had bought me a third-class ticket and I was not entitled to upper-class accommodations. Out of common decency, however, the Americans gave me a cabin, because I was pretty sick, and we were detained on account of U-boats.

We came by way of North Ireland and lay in Belfast Lough for several days. When we finally got under way, I went up on the promenade-deck to get some air. To my great surprise, there were American marines walking the upper-deck. It frightened me at first, because all I knew about the War was what I had managed to see from my little

prison-window. I had seen Count Lehmann's big dirigible brought down. It looked like a big cigar-torch, when it fell.

While crossing the Atlantic, we had to attend drills, just like fire-drills. In case of a U-boat attack, we would know what to do. They told us to sleep with life-belts on. I wasn't afraid. I was so glad to know I would not be buried in an English convict-grave.

On board ship there were only three women: A Belgian, the wife of a Washington diplomat, and myself. Nobody was allowed to travel over, except on business. The dame from Washington was a drug-addict. Most of the official crew visited her. One day, the doctor's assistant pointed her out, as we were passing her stateroom. There she was on the floor, dead to the world, with her long beautiful hair all awry. I was told most of the men had been intimate with her. She was a lady, so nothing was said about it. Otherwise, she might have been put into irons for the rest of the voyage.

Nobody on the boat interfered with me. Everybody was very kind. They thought I was a Catholic missionary. When I left my prison, the girls and nuns gave me beads, medals, and emblems. There was a bunch of sailors coming back from Standard Oil tankers, in China, to join the American Navy, and many of them were Irish. I gave them all my holy medals. Whether they were hard-boiled or not, they wore them round their necks out of respect for me. The result was that I was treated with more consideration, on that trip, than when I had traveled in state with supposed ladies and gentlemen.

After arriving at Sandy Hook, the stewardess told me I was wanted up in the saloon. There was Police Lieutenant Marvin, so drunk, he could hardly stand. "Hello, May,"

he said, "I came to take you to Ellis Island." He whispered so loud that everybody started to rubber. He kept saying, "Don't be afraid, May! Our boys will help you. The Chief is all right." By this time, everybody knew I was in the hands of the police. But they did not know the reason.

You may wonder why, after the English had deported me as an American citizen, I had to go to Ellis Island. The answer is, that, through somebody's blunder, the passport was not right. The British government did not have the positive proof that I was a citizen of the United States, but they were anxious to get rid of me.

When I was standing in line with the Americans, ready to show my papers, a ship official called me out, and said I would have to go into the alien line. While we were answering questions as to how long we had lived in the country we came from, etc., I tried to get back to the end of the file. When it came my turn, I told the gentleman, in glasses, who was asking questions, and writing answers, that I had lived ten years at my last address, at Aylesbury, England. When he said "Street and number?", I hesitated, for the passengers, near us, were listening.

"Are you deaf?" says the old bloke. "Don't you hear me?"

"I hear you," I replied. "How the Hell should I know the number? I boarded in the Prison. I went there in the Black Maria. I couldn't see the number."

The old gent was so astonished, his glasses fell off; and he simply gazed at me pop-eyed. After he recovered his speech, he said, "All right. That is enough." I walked on. You may imagine how I felt going past the ship's officers and the first-class passengers. The men, as usual, were de-

cent enough, mostly, to look away, but the lady-addict sneered at me.

"Madam," said I, "you certainly have a lot to laugh at, with so many gentlemen friends."

With my bold Lieutenant carrying my suit-case, which contained only a tooth brush, I was quickly passed through. The "Loot" pulled back the lapel of his coat and showed his tin; and, such is the majesty of the law, all the officials stepped aside. We boarded the little boat which took us from the big boat to Ellis Island. He kept impressing on my mind how good the boys were going to be to me. Dear old guy! I suppose he must be dead now, or retired. He gave me an image of St. Anthony. I told him I did not like that saint, because he was a woman-hater. I recall that he told me God would help me if nobody else would.

Finally, we got to the Island, and were received by two more bulls: Quinn and Marty Sheridan. The latter was the Irishman who, a few years before that time, threw the discus, at Athens, and beat the Greeks at their own game, to say nothing of the representatives of some other countries. He was a gentleman at all times. It wasn't the first time I had met Sheridan. I saw him at Lord's cricket grounds, about a year before I got my time.

And thus I came back to my country, which was mine, not by birth or adoption, but by clearance-cards in the shape of marriage certificates.

So much happened to me on Ellis Island, illustrative of the system, during the World War, that I think it will be interesting enough for a separate chapter. I was frazzled, and not able to cope with the unusual conditions which prevailed there, with regard to both myself and others. If I had been in my usual spirits, I probably could have laughed

it off. As it was, I was not, then, and am not now able to look at the picture without getting red-headed. It did seem, and still seems, to me, that no human beings should be treated the way people were, and are, treated at Ellis Island by this rich and generous nation.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOME, SWEET HOME

After I got to Ellis Island, as related in the previous chapter, the bulls took me before the Executive Committee, along with a lot of aliens. Among them were Germans from Panama, who were under suspicion. Poor folks! Many, or most, of them were cringing, all trying to prove various citizenships, frightened to the point of death.

As for me, I sat down and waited. All the rest were standing. I noticed the men on the bench kept eyeing me up, as if they were wondering at my nerve, before "The Presence." What did I care! Had I quaked or quivered under the Royal Arms of England, with judges and barristers in their ermine-trimmed, scarlet robes! Was I to be afraid of a bunch of heelers!

When my turn came, the president of the committee read my record—American, English, and French—to date. The cops, however, told him that that was not all. The rest was coming on the next boat.

This bald-headed old bozo it seemed, had a sense of humor. He said he knew Eddie Guerin as a boy in Chicago, and he was then a bad actor.

"May," said he, "I see you were arrested six times for grand larceny, the year before you were married in New York. You were discharged in every case. How did that happen?"

I pointed over to the bulls, and said, "Ask those fellows." He asked them how come.

They answered up, "Oh! She robbed sporting-men, while dancing with them, and they would never appear against her."

This president was nice to me. He said I should have remained in the United States. After he had fired a lot of questions at me, and had been answered, he said, "Will you help the authorities to prove your American citizenship?"

"Sure!" says I. "You don't suppose I want to go back to a bloody English detention camp? I have gladly told you all I could remember, and I will tell you anything else I can think up."

The police investigated. After three weeks, they decided I was an American. Since then police, who knew no better, have tried to get me for violating the immigration laws. They always fell down.

In the meanwhile, however, I was herded in with the aliens, awaiting my proofs—or disproofs. I shall never forget that experience. The place was literally packed as if with sardines. The government had just seized the Hamburg-American Line ships. The officers and crews made the Island full to overflowing. Strange as it may seem, however, they had the very best available accommodations, and got special food from the doctors' table. The others got food that nearly approached garbage.

The first day I was seated with Syrians, Palestinians, Arabs, Persians, etc., with great long beards, who ate with their hands. As soon as the waiter placed the food, they grabbed it up. He appeared to be sorry for me. I spoke English and he was puzzled why I was assigned to that crew.

At another table the German ship-officers sat down and ate like human beings. I don't know whether the waiter put them wise, or they guessed the situation; but, anyhow, they rolled some of their food into a napkin and sent it over to me by the waiter. I was famished.

After the first day, I did not go up to the big dining-room. I walked by myself into the yard, under the windows of the rooms where the Germans were detained. Although I did not speak or make a sign, I knew they were on the lookout for me. The waiter brought me plenty of food, which I ate in the women's washroom. Some people have hearts, in this world.

Comes now the first night! I was put into a large room, where the beds were hung on chains, in tiers. You had to climb up the chains to get into the upper beds. When the beds moved, the chains creaked. Here was where I spent my first night, no longer a convict, but a free American citizen.

The raucous voices of those foreigners, none of whom spoke English, and the variety of tongues in which they vociferated, made the place a bedlam. The Tower of Babel had witnessed no such clamor. I got up and sat on the cold stone floor by the door. The air was putrid. I could not sleep. The doctor came along and asked me if I could speak English. I told him yes, and begged him to have me moved. When he wouldn't, I cursed him out for all I was worth.

Next day, I sat on the bench in the yard, all day. I was beyond speech, and was dying for a good night's sleep. No pest-house for me, that night—not if I had to be carried in bodily! The guard was a big, burly Irishman, who pushed the immigrants into the kennel as if they were

dogs. The rest, dog-like, ran in, after shovings and tuggings, not saying a word. I backed up against the wall.

He shouted, "Come in! Do you understand?"

I wouldn't answer. He came over to manhandle me. I suppose he thought I did not speak English. I gave him a shove, when he was off poise, and nearly floored him. Then I let loose with such a volley of American, and English, abuse, that I nearly stunned him. Roughneck, that he was, I'll bet he never heard such a choice vocabulary since he came downstairs.

When he got voice, he wanted to know how a white lady got into such a position. As long as he seemed to want to act reasonably, I was willing to meet him halfway. I explained matters to him. It often pays to punch first, and then caress. He went at once and found a matron.

She was a German-American, who spoke several languages. All the matrons on Ellis Island are clever women, and linguists. She treated me very considerately, for which I was grateful. Almost immediately, she hunted up a Polish woman, and a Danish lady, with her little girl, and put them and me into a room together. She said, "When I know about it, I try to keep white people together, by themselves."

On the following day, I was sitting on a bench all alone, when an investigator, who was a doctor, came over and talked to me. He said he knew all about me, and was very sorry. He also said he would speak to Dr. Graham, a woman-doctor in the hospital, and have me kept there, while I was detained. Even a kind word and a cracker goes a long way with me.

So I went to the hospital, where I was treated with the greatest kindness. The Superintendent-nurse was a Miss Daly. She was a beautiful woman, and as good as she was

beautiful. Among other things, she gave me a nice gown to wear, when I was able to get out of bed.

The young doctors were grand. They gave me a blood-test. This frightened me. I had never had such a thing put over on me. The result of the test was that I was pronounced in good health. The only thing wrong with me was under-nourishment.

I hated to leave the hospital, when the detects came for me. They had to do the last trick, before setting me free, as is explained in my story about my attempts to go straight. Before that, however, I had had a good rest; I had taken on flesh, and Miss Daly had fitted me out with a nice tailor-made gown, underwear, and hat. She kept my other clothes as curios, bless her! It was just as well I had had the long wait, before I had to see the dicks. At least, I looked presentable.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW WAY

Age, punishment and poverty had brought me to my knees, temporarily. I began to cast up the ledger of my life, and figure out profit and loss. What had crime brought me in the long run? What had it brought any of my companions? What had become of the considerable sums I had filched from society? According to all the rules of common sense I ought to show a profit. But no, there was a big deficit to show, instead.

My overhead was too great. The fences, lawyers, courts, bribe-takers, and leaches had got nine-tenths of my gross. I had had good times and hard times, but I had had to work hard and suffer much for the good times, and the hard times came in spite of me, like bad seasons with the farmer. Good business judgment demanded that I get into another line.

All these things were impressed on me on my return to this country in 1917, a criminal American-citizeness, deported home, through mine-strewn fields, at the behest of antagonistic British society. I still had fight left in me, and would have been willing to fight, but for the fact that I was disarmed as soon as I got past Ellis Island and into the hands of—the New York Police.

Much to my surprise, they all greeted me cordially. They acted as if they were willing to let by-gones be by-gones,

and showed me all the consideration they could, according to the rules. Some actually went out of their way to show their sympathy and willingness to help me get started right.

When I was ushered into the New York Central Office, I was greeted by John Cray, the chief. He shook hands with me as if I was an old friend, and acted as if he was sorry for my troubles. We had known each other before I left the country. The old-timer dicks all gathered round me, and gave me the glad hand. Some had been wardsmen and on beats, when I left.

The first thing the chief suggested, of all things, was to keep the youngsters outside, so that I would not be bothered! The next thing I knew some of the boys were slipping me money, so that I would not be up against it. What is more, I was told they knew I had been jacketed by Scotland Yard.

One detective, Handsome Jimmie Dalton, took it on himself to offer to put me under the care of the Catholic Aid. I was convinced, by that time, that I wanted to go straight, so I accepted his offer, with thanks. He was a respectable man, and wanted to help me in a decent way.

I was a free woman, but the police had to do their duty, under the circumstances, so I was finger-printed and photographed. I was not brought before the line-up. Whether this was kindness or diplomacy, I don't know. The line-up would have meant newspaper-publicity, and the English probably didn't want to answer a possible charge of barbarity for sending an American woman through the submarine-lanes.

I went to the Home of the Aid, and waited to see Mrs. Captain Armstrong, the head of the Catholic Aid in America. She never came near me; so the nuns, in charge of the home,

advised me to go see the Reverend Father X. When I went to his house, he was very cordial.

I was dressed like other women, by this time, thanks to the money the dicks had given, but I didn't want a mass, it seemed, or express a desire to spend money. When I told the priest who I was, he said, "Oh, yes! I have heard all about you. You were a thief all your life. How can I help you?"

I told him I did not want money from him, just some kind of work, no matter how menial, just enough to let me live decently. I even told him I did not want lady-like, clerical work, or a bank position. He said he was sorry, but that that sort of help was out of his jurisdiction.

With that I was dismissed, after he asked me if I needed a nickel to ride home.

Back I went to the Home, gathered together my few belongings, and started out on my own. Among other places, I went to a certain hospital in New York, offered my services to the Red Cross, as a volunteer, and was lucky enough to be accepted. The lady-superintendent was a Canadian. I told her a yarn about what I had suffered during the War.

His Lordship, Bishop Keatings, sent me a letter and enclosed two five-pound treasury notes. The communication wished me good luck in the new country, hoped I would bear no ill-will against the mother-country on account of my misfortune, urged me to have courage, and wound up with some pious drivel. The showing of the letterhead to the superintendent made the road smooth for me. Canadian-like, she was much impressed, when she saw it was from a person of great dignity in the community. I was to have got twenty dollars a month, and my board and room. Now

it was arranged that I was to get two nights' work, extra, a week.

All I had were the clothes I wore and a few white dresses to work in. And work! I would be so tired that I would fall asleep in the chair before I could get undressed to go to bed. I never went outside, farther than the roof, during the entire time I was there.

I gave the treasury notes, from Bishop Keatings, to an orderly, to have cashed into dollars. He quit his job, got drunk, and I never saw the ten pounds again. But this did not discourage me. I slaved on.

After I had been at the hospital three months, I went up on the roof with the nurses and volunteers, and one of the doctors made a group-photograph of us. In a couple of days, they called me into the office, paid me the few dollars that were coming to me, and told me I had a nerve to crash in there. To this day, I have never discovered how they found out about me. Perhaps some one saw my rogues-gallery picture and recognized me in the snap-shot—or vice versa. I don't believe it was the police. It might have been a stool-pigeon.

An old lady, in the next room to me, saw me crying and wanted to know the reason. I told her; and explained that I wanted to go straight, but they wouldn't let me. I only had a few dollars, because I had been using my wages to buy clothes. This dame sent me to her daughter, the widow of a letter-carrier, in East X. Street, who turned out to be a very nice lady, having one daughter, a telephone operator. I was to share a room with the young woman.

I started out bravely, and boarded a cross-town car, with my belongings, and a hand-bag containing fourteen dollars and some change. When I got to my new home, I opened

my bag to pay the woman in advance, but I had only four dollars. A pickpocket had relieved me of a small purse, which contained a ten dollar bill.

I couldn't help but laugh to think of me being nicked. The woman listened to my explanation, and agreed to take three dollars on account. I made the dollar stretch as far as it could, by eating five cent meals—soup and bread at cheap lunch counters.

Soon afterwards, I was introduced, as a nurse out of employment, to a young man, who lived next door. He took me out to supper one night and, believe me, I was glad to get a big square meal. We got more and more intimate. He learned my story and asked me to come and live with him.

Although I had been walking my legs off, trying to get any sort of work, I had absolutely failed. I was discouraged. Why not give up the struggle? I accepted.

I became bad again. After the lapse of time, I was laid by the heels, and sent to the New York Penitentiary on Blackwell's Island. I was discharged on probation.

Mrs. Peacock took me over to New York City, and from there to Elizabeth, N. J., to work in St. Elizabeth's Hospital. After waiting an hour, we had an interview with the Mother Superior. She agreed that I could work there for a while. The Probation Officer left and I was left, sitting.

Along came an old working-nun, with a brogue which proved she was as Irish as the pigs of Shute Hill. "Sure, girl, do you want your dinner?" says she. "Yes, Sister," says I.

She took me downstairs to the refectory, and I had a good meal of fresh fish, potatoes, and good tea. After eat-

ing, I started to put on an old dress I had in my bag, to help the waitress, when they sent for me to go upstairs. There were two young, very snippy sisters, dressed in white, in the office.

They asked me if I could cook for forty people. I told them that I did not know how to cook, but that I would be willing to do any kind of other work. They then told me they had no other work for me to do, and that I ought to go home before it got dark.

I explained that I had no home; that they ought to have told this to the probation officer; and that if I was arrested, being on probation, no one would believe I was innocent, especially judges or police officials. I also told them no one would believe me, if I said Catholic nuns had turned me out into the street, a poor woman with no money for lodging, just out of jail. But I couldn't move them, so I left.

As a matter of fact, I had seventeen dollars, but I knew that that would not go very far. I went straight to Newark, thinking to go to the Y. W. C. A. I changed my mind, however, and decided I had had enough of religious people, for the time being. They all appeared to be alike.

Then I walked the streets, until I saw a room-to-let sign, and rented the hovel for seven dollars a week, in advance. I told the landlady I came from Toledo. A text, on the wall of my new home, struck my eye at once: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This made me laugh, because I had decided to apply the text after my own fashion.

Within an hour, after my arrival in Newark, I dropped into the back-room of a saloon in Payne Street, and relieved an old bozo of a hundred dollars. Then I beat it, got a few

drinks and had a swell meal. "And so to bed," as Sam Pepys says, "and fair contentment with the day's work."

In the course of time, I drifted into Detroit; and worked there steadily for several months, before I got into trouble again. Here I met several friends, who took an interest in me, and persuaded me to try again.

August Vollmer, Chief of Police of Berkeley, Calif., a criminologist, and a real uplifter, first put it into my head to write the story of my life. I promised him to go straight, and I have kept that promise, thus far, in letter and in spirit.

My first success in the new line of work, was when newspaper men helped me to publish five stories in the New York American Weekly, for which I was handsomely paid. With this encouragement, and after several false starts, I am now at work on this document under the advice of a lawyer who says I am a chump if I don't go straight and make a living doing it.

CHAPTER XXX

THE PROCURER

I come now to a part of my life which fills me with disgust for myself, when I look back upon it. The period is from 1917 to 1925. How the man in the case could have acted the way he did, I can't begin to imagine. How I could have stood for him as long as I did, is beyond me or anybody else. As I recall all the circumstances, I cannot even charge up my actions simply to gratitude. My debt on that score must surely have been paid many-fold. No, I was a soft fool, if ever there was one, without rhyme or reason. There was absolutely no excuse.

I came back from serving a total of a little more than ten years in the English prison, resolved to go straight, hoping it would pay better in the long run than continuing in the crook-business. New York police welcomed me generously, as a fallen foe, and did their part in starting me right. Others in the city whom I came into contact with, however, did not have the same sentiments. Circumstances threw me into the crooked way of least resistance. When I was actually starving, looking for work, chance introduced me to W. Avery, who gave me a good square meal, learnt my history, and suggested that we live together. At first, he was fine.

We moved out of the neighborhood, where both of us lived, and got an apartment in the Bronx. I went to Avery's

old rooms, and did his packing. My few duds could be put into a handbag, in no time. He was manager in a downtown restaurant and had to go to work very early. A colored man came to do the moving.

I had been handed a twenty dollar bill to give the moving man, who was known to my friend. A deposit of twenty-five dollars had been paid on the new apartment, and the balance was to be paid when he moved in. Not having seen colored men for more than ten years, I was a little timid about dealing with one. I put the twenty on the mantel, went into the bathroom and shouted, "Mr. Avery said to give you that money on the mantel-piece to pay the landlady of the new place." He called out a little later, "Lady, I can't pay for much of a place with two dollars."

I was all upset and nearly fainted. What would Avery think, knowing about my past? Would he think I had stolen the money and had gypped him? Would I lose my protector? I went to the phone, crying, and told him all about it. He reassured me, said there must be some mistake, and ultimately straightened out the whole affair, leaving me clear of all blame. I could have wept for joy. We moved into our home. For the first time in more than ten and a half years, I was my own boss. I could get up when I pleased, go to bed when I pleased, and do as I pleased. But I wanted to please my man.

This guy turned out to be pretty good to me at first. He got me a winter coat, and promised to take me downtown in a few weeks and get me a winter hat. We bought the hat. On the way home, we went into a saloon, and I had my first drink in more than ten years. He drank considerable; but I was very abstemious, because I knew I was no longer used to liquor. Avery wanted to stop off at 125th

Street and 3d Avenue. When we got on the express downtown, he asked a big-nosed Levantine to give me his seat. The man refused. My companion took him by the nose and lifted him out of the seat; and I sat down.

When we got off the train I was still laughing at the joke, missed my step, and fell all the way from the top down to the bottom of the stairs. My man could neither stop nor catch me. I just rolled as if a cyclone had struck me. When I finally landed, I remember somebody saying, "Her back is broken." Then I passed out. They poured brandy down my throat and spilled it on my coat collar. When I got to the Harlem Hospital, the doctors would have it that I was an alcoholic patient, but Avery explained everything.

He knew all about me, the very worst, and could have left me at this juncture in my career. Would to God he had done so and I had never seen him any more! It would have saved me much misery in the years to come.

I remained in the hospital a week before they X-rayed me and found I had injured the sixth vertebra. They kept me in that hospital several weeks. That was the terrible winter of 1918, and it was almost impossible to get me home. But finally my man got a car and took me to our apartment, where I stayed for nearly three months before I was able to walk and get about again.

Eventually I came back to nearly normal. When I did, this guy started to double-cross me. When I look back, to go over the happenings of that time, I sometimes think he felt that I owed him everything and he decided to collect in full. He could count on my gratitude.

Avery gave me an old bulldog. When I was not able to move from a chair, the dog sat at the door until the boss came home. He took this dog away when we broke up house-

keeping, one time, and having opened up another flat for a woman he knew before he met me, gave her the dog. A friend of mine saw her with the animal going into her apartment in Amsterdam Avenue.

I found the place in the dark, kicked in the door, took the dog and put him to board in a pet-shop in 125th Street. The woman got out a warrant for me for unlawful entry. In the meantime Avery was visiting me in my joint in 126th Street, telling me he was living with his family in Brooklyn.

By this time I went out stealing, and he was sharing the proceeds with me. The bulls arrested me for burglary and stealing the dog. They took me down for the line-up and everything was explained. Chief Cray said, "This is a smear case. She has robbed nobody. I can see through a stone wall." I walked out; but there had been so much publicity on account of the newspaper stories that I got another apartment, at 116th Street and 7th Avenue.

It was not long before Avery phoned me at the new place. It seemed that things were not going so well at the little restaurant I had bought for him in Chambers Street. I had not given him any money for several weeks. By this time I had an account in the Post Office. He told me to draw a hundred dollars and to dress myself better. I drew the money, and the two of us went into a place at 127th Street and Lenox Avenue.

We had an argument, and it became too late to buy anything. "Give me the money to keep for you; and we will get your things in the morning," he said to me, as we were about to separate. I did so. He didn't show up to keep the appointment, but used the money for his own purposes. Then he lost the restaurant and came to live with me again.

After this we lived in several cities, principally Philadel-

phia. I took all of the chances. He took most of the profits. He had become a confirmed procurer, and I was his willing slave, though I complained and got to have less and less respect for him, as time went on. During the entire period I lived with him, from then on, Avery only worked one month as a guard in a munition plant, at Amatol, N. J., and several weeks as a professional strike-breaker round anthracite mines in Pennsylvania.

He was with what was known as a wrecking-crew, armed to the teeth. If the poor miners opened their mouths, they were blackjacked. When he took the job, he told me he had hired out as a mess-cook. Later, I heard the truth from another fink (strike-breaker). As a result of this rotten work, Avery got a scar on his nose and a large scar on his cheek.

It seems he rode his horse up the steps of a miner's house to serve him with eviction papers. The Hunkey's wife was an Irish woman. She told him he was a disgrace to the name of Kelly, according to Avery's story to me. He called the woman a dirty slut. She grabbed a brick, and threw it with such good effect that she knocked him off the horse and he got scars which he would carry to his grave.

When I asked him why he did not tell the woman his name was not Kelly but Avery, he replied, "Kelly is good enough to use for a pimp."

About 1920, we came back to New York from Philadelphia, with a few thousand dollars which I had managed to save, in spite of all he spent. I furnished a flat in 125th Street, West. The very first night he went out and got drunk. I dropped in to a place to find him. There I found him with Lillie (the woman he lived with in Amsterdam Avenue!), boasting how he was going to educate a little

girl, Lillie's illegitimate child. The poor baby was born in a sporting-house in Albany, and no one knew who its father was. You may imagine how I raved.

The argument lasted several hours. I got so mad at him, that I handed him a couple of punches. He had the gun and blackjack on him that I had bought for him when he worked in the munition plant. He hit me with the jack. I grabbed the gun and took a couple of shots at him and missed. In no time, the house was full of cops. The gun was found in the ice-box. We were taken over to the 125th Street police station, where, as luck would have it, none of the boys knew me. They thought we were just respectable people having a row. Then we were taken to the Harlem Court and sent to the Tombs.

While we were locked up, Avery sent out the key of my new flat to this Jane of his, and she and her sister and child went to live there, telling the janitor she was "Mr. Avery's wife," and that I was a bad woman. I sent for my warm coat, but got back word that the place was locked up by order of the police. The woman was a drunkard and pawned the best of my things and Avery's to buy liquor. Nobody knew me in the Tombs. The matron put me with the first offenders. After being there a while, it began to look as if I had a chance to be sprung. The Jane hearing this, tipped off the police as to my identity. The newspapers got the story.

I came up for sentence before Judge Collins. He heard the whole story, with everybody knocking me. When the officer read off my record, there were loud murmurings of anticipation round the court room, everybody thinking a bad character was going to get hers. Imagine the surprise, when the Judge let me off with a suspended sentence, bawled

out "Kelly," gave him ninety days for carrying a gun, without a permit, and told him no jury would have convicted me if I had killed him.

"But you, you apology for a man, you thought because she was Chicago May, you could abuse her," said this fine judge. It was testified by the doctor that I was black and blue from the blackjacking.

Off I went to my apartment, thinking I could stay there, until my month was up, or get a rebate on my rent. With all the thousands I had stolen, I didn't have a penny. A reporter gave me a quarter for carfare. When I reached 125th Street, one of the boys told me the situation: The other woman was in possession; Kelly had figured I would get a ride, and he would have my place and stand in with the other girl.

I got Red Cain, a hard guy, to go with me and drag out the furniture. The doors were locked, so we pushed in a side window, and opened up from the inside. I had an express wagon downstairs, having borrowed some ready cash. In less than half an hour, what was left of my belongings were in storage and the Jane's glad rags were left in the empty flat. The janitor looked on and said nothing. He knew he was up against the gas-house gang of Harlem.

I went to Philadelphia, in order to work in quiet and rehabilitate myself. While I was there, Mr. Kelly sent me word, by a friend, begging me to send him a little money so that he could buy smokes. Would you believe it, I did so! I knew what it was to suffer in prison, and I did not have the heart to refuse. I not only sent him money but I took a trip to visit him. I said I was his wife, and they let me in. After I left, somebody handed them the tip, and they were quite peeved.

Altogether I sent him a hundred and eighty dollars and put another hundred dollars in the Post Office in his name, in case I got into trouble and could not help him when he got out. I also got his clothes out of hock, but could never find my own coat, which the Jane had pawned. When he had done his bit, I met him at the boat in New York. To hear him, you would think he had done ninety months instead of days. I took my furniture out of storage and furnished a creep-joint and a private apartment. Avery and I started to live together again.

I made up my mind that Avery would have to help me, if he wanted to share in the profits of my work. He appeared to do so, but he was afraid to take all of the Johns' dough, thinking that he would escape the vengeance of the sucker and the law if he only took part. Although I have not mentioned my procurer's name in several of the incidents I have related, he was the "helper"-guy. When I told how I got him out of the jam in Chicago and lost my fur coat, I was ashamed of being mixed up with him. And yet I stuck by him and worked for him.

On one occasion, Avery escaped by hiding in the trunk and I took the rap on Blackwell's Island. When I got out, I was on parole. Avery nearly dropped dead when I suddenly appeared at a joint in 110th Street, New York, near the police station, where he was manager. He was forced to work at something while I was in jail. He was afraid I would break my parole and start work, getting himself and me into trouble. All I could persuade him to do was to give me a drink and some food.

I arranged with a lady in Newark, N. J., to answer my parole, that is, forward my letter-reports back and forward. Then I went to Boston and started in on the racket, much

to Avery's relief. But he didn't mind writing to me and asking me for money. I used to send him enough to live on.

When I came back from Boston where it was nearly discovered by the dicks that I was on parole, Kelly plucked up enough courage to go with me to Newark and work the racket. I was afraid of being caught in New York.

We were not there long before my parole-time expired, and I received a nice letter from the Commissioner, complimenting me on living up to the rules and going straight. From Newark, we went over to Philadelphia for a few months. While Kelly was away working at some real work, I went up to Portland, and Old Orchard, Maine, and back again to Philly, working all the time.

To get rid of my parasite, I introduced him to Daisy Rogers, or Lee, who was a booster (shoplifter). I met her in the New York pen. She became sorry for me and agreed to take the pimp off my hands. I would not join their enterprise because I knew that end of that game was not profitable and too risky. They operated in several small towns in Pennsylvania, cleaning up.

In Boston, however, they were signed out of Jordan and White's store. They had to sign an agreement, under threat of prosecution, not to enter the place again. Back they came to Philly, and then on to Cleveland, where they made a wonderful killing at the May sales.

They blew into Detroit and sent me such flattering reports that I went on there and joined them. I had been doing pretty well as a result of their endeavors. I got the best of the clothes and some of the money. It was time somebody was working for me.

Daisy was a cured drug-addict, as the result of a course of treatment in a Baltimore prison. Now, however, she had

no nerve unless she swallowed a couple of quarts of moonshine a day. From Detroit, I followed them to Chicago, always refusing to boost. It is a cheap employment unless you go in for straight jewelry or pennyweighting. Daisy took the rap at Chi, as I have told, and I lost my fur coat.

Back Avery and I came to Detroit, and we laid low. He was always grumbling about how much money I had of his, so I bought him a blind-pig. He just coined money. It went to his head to really earn money of his own, without having a woman hand it to him.

Then he started to stage parties, where show girls and fairies of all sorts held forth. When he came to my apartment, which was seldom, he became quite indignant because I could not see the jolly side of his parties. I told him it was all right to sell booze, because everybody was doing it, but I drew the line at filth, vulgarity, and degeneracy.

He said I was a jealous crank, and I warned him that the police would close down on him if he went too far. He would not let me come to the place, because he was afraid I would start something. One night I watched him. He went into a first floor room. I knocked gently on the door and got into the place. Three girls, stark naked, were drinking and smoking; but I paid no attention to the little bums. They knew no better. I was sore on Kelly and hit him with the butt end of a gun, knocking out two of his teeth.

The whole hotel was in an uproar. He ran out and jumped into his car. What I said that night was aplenty. The police closed the place, and the landlord would have nothing more to do with him. He had to go to the hospital with something worse than the results of my beating. It took him three

months to get cured, and he had to spend every penny he had ever made.

After he left the hospital, he had the nerve to ask me if he could come to my apartment. As he was down-and-out, sick and penniless, and I had a big apartment with an extra room, I told him to come on. I got a colored girl to wait on him. I was out a good deal, and could not be bothered with him.

By this time I had saved considerable money, and he swore, by his father's memory, that if I would forgive and forget, he would try, if I would try, to go straight. We were to start all over again and wipe the slate clean.

Kelly still had his car. I told him to drive to Pittsburgh and I would go by train and meet him there. After he started, I was told that he had gone East with a girl who was described to me. I checked into the Fort Pitt Hotel, as soon as I landed in Pittsburgh, and took a taxi and went out to the motor-terminal for western motors. He was alone, but I hit him in the eye, just the same, because I had heard some other things about him which made me believe he was getting ready to double-cross me.

Again Mr. Kelly swore, by all that was holy, that he was on the square and he had told me no lie. Just the same, he tried to get me to work Pittsburgh, but I refused and told him the place was too dirty. Once more, we came back to Philadelphia.

We got a swell apartment in Spring Garden Street. The very first night, he went out and got so drunk that he did not know what he had done with his car. What was more, he had lost or given away about five hundred dollars which I had handed him to keep for our expenses. The next thing I knew he would be out all day long, after he got his break-

fast. In that respect, I did have some backbone. I never waited on him. He always had to do the housework.

Kelly kept spending money and earning none, so I had to go back to work at my trade. I left for Erie, Pa., in a hurry, one night after a shakedown, and Kelly followed. Then we went to Cleveland, where I did very well. Again, I had enough money to go straight and he agreed that that was the best thing for both of us.

I went to Detroit by train. Kelly had the keys for the baggage. He drove in my car to Monroe, to see some real estate man. When I reached my destination, I put up at the Tuller Hotel, thinking my good man would arrive next day. I waited three days. He had my car, money, jewelry, and baggage. He had gained my confidence, because he had not touched a drop since the beginning of our last stay in Philly.

As I only had fifty dollars, I had to get out of the hotel and get cheap quarters. I thought the baby had been hi-jacked and thrown into the Detroit River, or maybe arrested, never dreaming that he might have beat it. Along comes a letter from Kelly, telling me he has been arrested in Toledo. It was a stall. That is the last I ever saw or heard from the gent, himself.

As soon as I could manage to get a couple of hundred dollars together, I started out to hunt for him. My investigator traced him to Toledo all right. He was living in a sporting-house with a twenty-two-year-old girl, the same one he had taken East with him. He got a little place in Orange Street after the police chased him out of this dump.

Then he married the girl, though he had a wife living in Sheepshead Bay. I got a gun and started out for revenge. Before I could lay my hands on him, he and the girl had beat it.

The next I heard of them, they were arrested in Cleveland for shoplifting, where they got a fine and left. Then they were arrested in Toledo and held on suspicion.

By this time I was very sick. I was advised to forget the whole matter, as not worth the time, trouble, or expense. I was assured some member of the fraternity would get him for a double-crosser. One time, I went to Monroe to try to locate him. They wanted me there to put the Mann Act on him, but I refused to do that.

I could have shot him like a dog, but I couldn't have him pinched. If I could have got him in the State of Michigan, I could have killed him, and the greatest punishment I would have got would have been a life sentence. I did not want, however, to give my life for him, as long as I remained cool.

Several times I have heard rumors about him, but I do not know if they were substantial, or merely fakes to throw me off his track. I have cooled down considerably, but it would be better for him not to get too near me. The worm turns. I have paid my debt to him.

CHAPTER XXXI

CRIMINAL JARGON

I have often thought it would be interesting and instructive to get up a combination dictionary and encyclopedia of words, names, manners, customs, biographical sketches, etc., connected with the underworld. This was very strong on me when I was in prison, reading, but I did not have the privilege of doing it. No pleasures like that were allowed. Some of these days, I may get at it; though I realize it will involve a lot of research, historical and otherwise.

One of the difficulties connected with many dialects is that they are not perpetuated by their own literature. The result is that they vary, from time to time, and from place to place. This results in confusion and misunderstanding, and differences of meaning for the same words. The context is often the only clue the crook has in determining the meaning of some words. A dick may mean a detective, or a policeman. A harness-bull, however, is, properly, only a policeman in uniform. A dictionary, such as I have mentioned, would be of great benefit to both the police and the educated criminal.

It is manifestly impossible for me within the limitations of this work to give an adequate terminology. As I have been a badger, pay-off, note-layer, creep, panel, and blackmailer, mostly, I shall explain them in more detail than some other words, which will be mere definitions. Others are better qualified to make them clear and to add to the list. Like my French I understand it better than I speak or write it.

The badger is a nocturnal animal, which burrows and eats flesh. I have been told of a famous fight between a bulldog and a badger, in which the bulldog won, but was killed. The badger's claws had been smeared with poison. What could be more fitting for a name for this class of crook, of which I was a member. The game is also called the shakedown.

Women, mostly with male assistants, are the badgers; and men are the victims. A man of money and social position is selected, or come upon accidentally, who cannot afford to call in the police. When he is in a compromising position, a witness appears; and nothing remains but to shake him down. Sometimes the man fights. He either takes his publicity-medicine or frightens the badger away. Both may happen.

The methods are numerous, with many variations. A few will suffice. It is late at night. Along the street comes the proper gent. Suddenly a fake fight is started and a lady cries for help. Up comes the gent to the rescue. The lady falls into his arms and faints, clinging to her savior.

Several things may happen, then. If the policeman comes up, the fake hold-up man may beat the gent and swear he was trying to assault the lady; or the confederate may run away, and the lady will scream, and say the gent tried to assault her; or the fake may run "home," and the lady will be so overcome that she will have to be escorted "home," where the fake can appear on the scene and demand satisfaction for the seduction of his good wife.

Even the retrieving of a handkerchief, dropped purposely by a lady, has led to badgering. Cabs are favorite places for the sport. If the victim can be lured into a bedroom and fall for feminine charms, so much the better. Before he can ac-

complish his purpose, the brother or mother appears on the scene to denounce him, and demand satisfaction.

Not content with this sort of evidence, the better class operators fix up luxurious traps with heavy curtains and other accessories, and use a dictograph or camera. It does not take much imagination to figure out the possibilities, in various situations.

The branches of the crook's profession overlap each other. Thus, a woman may start out to badger an individual and find it advantageous to simply steal. On the other hand, she may decide to shift to the creep or panel game. In general, these operations begin away from the woman's "home"—and wind up there.

Let me turn now to creeps. This branch, as its name implies, is pulled off by a confederate, who sneaks up to and robs the man's clothes while he is otherwise engaged. As in the case of the badger racket, it may merge into a "discovery and denunciation," with throwings-out or threats to call the police. Then it becomes badgering. The creeping may be done from under the bed, from an adjoining room, from a closet, or even from a large trunk.

Paneling has certain advantages over the two other forms of stealing. The chief reason for this is that some men are satisfied to have a good time playing cards, or drinking. It is easy to heat the room to excess, and set the example of taking off coats and outer garments. A heavy chair is placed with its back to the sliding panel, in a wall or door, the victim's coat is thrown over the chair, and the victim is seated with his back to the works. The game does not always pan out as planned. The John may have his dough in his trousers, or a money belt, or in three or four places about his person. Then tactics have to be changed.

The panel may be placed at the back of the bed. The sucker hangs his clothes on the only place allowed to be available—the bedpost or a clothes-tree. Wherever he hangs them is where the trap is set. It is very important to remove the incriminating evidence of the panel. In some cases the door containing the panel may be shifted and an honest door substituted. This last I have spoken about elsewhere, in one of my own cases. Oiled windows and dumb-waiters are sometimes used. In case the prey is drugged, there is no need to bother with elaborate machinery.

In blackmailing, the sucker generally has himself to blame. He will write letters, sign checks, give autographed photographs, press his card into your "unwilling" hand, tell his family history and a hundred and one things he ought not to do. Weak and generous men are easy marks. Even when they have no social exposure to fear, they dread to be laughed at.

Most of the Johns pay, and pay dearly, according to their means. Few have guts enough to commit suicide. The blackmailer is insatiable. Sometimes he exposes the dupe after he has been milked dry. The sucker does not even get his money's worth.

I have first-hand knowledge of a blackmailing game pulled off on a broker at Broad and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, some years ago, with the help of a camera and a "husband." The broker never squealed but he went broke, all right. He was an old man, and he should have known better.

A Philadelphia judge of a prominent family used to drink a great deal and philander with the ladies. One dame persuaded him her ancestors came over on the Mayflower, and asked him to take her to New York. When they got over there she turned the trick all by herself, got him drunk and

took him to a room. He was fool enough to sign the hotel-register and be otherwise identified. The Mann White Slave Act hung over his head, and he died a poor man.

A Pennsylvania jurist, a holder of public office, and a very prominent man outside of his own State, was blackmailed to the day of his death. He left a will which told the story, admitted he was to blame, and said it all came about by making the first payment.

Those who are wise to these stories, and there are many more of them, will know who I mean.

I am in favor of the English law which, I believe, allows a married man to commit adultery once, without giving his wife grounds for divorce. The reason is that man is a weak thing in the hands of a designing woman. To his credit, however, it should be said, that, unlike the angels, he often is sorry and tries to reform. Many a man is so remorseful after his first slip, that he braces up and never repeats. Such a man ought to be forgiven and allowed another chance, I don't care what injured wives may say. God knows, they are often to blame for backsliding spouses.

Speaking of England, reminds me of some more law there. If a man is robbed in the street, or in a place publicly adjacent to a street, like a doorway or vestibule, the offense is "assault and robbery from the person." The maximum penalty is twenty years. Paneling, or creeping, only carries eighteen months, because the John went to the room of his own accord, and ought to know what to expect.

Here are a few definitions; some of these expressions have been explained in the text, and some are self-explanatory. This list, which is in the nature of a code, is very far from being complete. It was used by educated thieves for correspondence between members of their gangs. You will notice

that the last words in many of these expressions rhyme with their definitions. The object of all this was to throw dicks off the track if they stumbled on any professional correspondence of members of the gang.

Moll Buzzers—people who rob women.
Hooks, Whizzers, or *Dips*—pickpockets.
Slims, Rats, Squealers, Squawkers, Stool-Pigeons, Stools, Pigeons or *Narks* (English)—police informers.
Bulls, Dicks, Harness-Bulls, John Elbows, or *John Laws*—police officers, depending on the kind.
Laying Down the Querre (usually called "The Queer"), comes from the French argot, and means false or counterfeit money.
Laying the Note—crooked advertising.
Taking a sleigh ride—getting morphine.
Snow-Birds—morphine addicts.
Mrs. White—the name used to and for dope-peddlers.
Pay-Off Men, or *Cons*—confidence men (or women).
Peter Men, Yeggs, Blowers—safe crackers.
Heavy Guys—stick-up men, or safe-breakers.
Gun Molls, or *Trips*—women who steal from men in the street, or carry guns.
Boosters, or Hoisters—shoplifters.
Stir, Can, Bird-Lime Can, Iron Horse, or *Big House*—jail.
Bouncer—the plug-ugly who throws out the victims who want to make trouble, especially in a house of prostitution.
The Madam—the proprietor of a house of prostitution.
White Slaves—inmates of a house of prostitution who cannot get away, for various reasons, principally because they are always in debt to the Madam.
Bracelets—handcuffs.
Johns, Suckers—men who are lured by crooks, mostly women.
Sods, Fairies, Sads, Masocks—degenerates or sexual perverts, according to the type.
Trailer—helper or assistant.
Pinch—arrest.
Grand—$1000.00.
Century—$100.00.
Prowlers, Hotel Prowlers, etc.—sneak thieves, as the adjective describes.

Sparklers, sparks, shiners, stones, ice (*English*), etc.—diamonds.
Touch—either borrowing or stealing.
Spring—to set free, or "beat" the case.
Call Out—to use a stolen check to get baggage, etc.
Gopher—one who tunnels to steal.
Honky-tonk—gaudy saloon with back-room hangout.

Jolt—prison sentence.
Dud—substitute or fake.
Tail—follow or shadow.
Locating—getting prospects.
Weigh-in—to meet.
Jug—jail, prison or safe.
Stem—drill.
Screw—key.
Panhandler—professional beggar.
Punk—apprentice thief.
Hoops—rings.
Target—outside man.
Dan—dynamite.
Stickers—postage-stamps.
Steerer—shyster-lawyer.
Bindle—blanket or bundle.
White line, Dr. Hall, Mickey—alcohol.
Chuck—food.
D. D.—deaf and dumb.
Playhouse—easy prison.
Clam-up—to keep quiet.
Shive—knife.
Mulligan—stew.
Connector—beggar.
Pennies—money.
Gump—chicken.
Box—safe.
Cons—convicts or confidence men.
Flop—cheap place to sleep.
Rap—to put wise, a pinch.
Yen-Yen—hop habit.

Irish lasses—glasses.
I suppose—nose.
Dot and dash—mustache.
Tumble and trips—lips.
North and south—mouth.
Under beneaths—teeth.
Heart and lung—tongue.
Out and in—chin.
Thick and thin—grin.
Train wreck—neck.
Chalk boulders—shoulders.
Chalk farm—arm.
Wooly west—breast or chest.
Brace and bits—breasts.
Darby kelly—belly.
Songs and sighs—thighs.
Mumbly pegs—legs.
High seas—knees.
Plates of meat—feet.
Oscar Joes—toes.
German bands—hands.
Long and lingers—fingers.
Simple Simon—diamond.
Brothers and sisters—whiskers.
Ocean waves—shave.
Sydney harbor—barber.
Leaning fat—hat.
Tit for tat—cap.
Charlie Rawler—collar.
Lamb fry—tie.
Seldom see—B.V.D.'s.
Do and dare—underwear.
Dig and dirt—shirt.
Fiddle and flute—suit.

Ditch—hide.
Soft stuff—paper money.
Smoke—to shoot.
Smoke irons—guns.
Whittler—constable.
Yaffle—to arrest.
Rooting—working, stealing.
Office—signal.
Batter—beg.
Doss—camp.
Jungle—crooks' territory.
Script—money, paper money
Aunt Jane—Tia Juana, Mex.
Jungle buzzard—hobo sneak-thief, preys on his own kind.
Bos—hoboes.
Lusher—lone drinker.
Frisk—search, steal from person.
Lump of lead—head.
Bonny fair—hair.
Tears and cheers—ears.
Center lead—forehead.
Chips and chase—face.
Mince pies—eyes.
Ivory float—coat.
Uncles and aunts—pants.
Johnny Rowsers—trousers.
Sunday best—vest or dress.
Oscar Hocks—socks.
Ones and twos—shoes.
Daisy Roots—boots.
Joe Roke—smoke.
Cherry ripe—pipe.
Rattle and jar—car.
Gay and frisky—whiskey.
Near and far—bar.
Rise and shine—wine.
Oh, my—dear beer.
Elephant trunk—drunk.
Bottles and stoppers—coppers.
Shovel and broom—room.
Weeping willow—pillow.
Loop the loop—hoop, or ring.
Bees and honey—money.
Block and tackle—watch and chain.
Heap of coke—bloke.
Fields of wheat—street.
Piperheidsick—look or see.

CHAPTER XXXII

ALIASES, CROOKS AND OTHERS

In the course of my career of stealing, I adopted various aliases. There were also social and business reasons for this. During the life of my parents, I kept my family-name (Desmond) hidden from even my closest associates. After I had acquired a reputation as a crook, I had to change the name given me by my confreres, to outwit the law and stool-pigeons. I did what a spy would do in enemy country. The lawyers told me the common-law permitted the changing of names, at will, without permission of court. They said it could only be used against me, as prima facie evidence, in case I got pinched. I found out by experience, however, that it was also used against me in fixing sentence, after conviction.

In Chicago, I adopted the Christian name of May, dropping "Beatrice," which was given me at baptism, and which was the name known to my uncle's family and neighbors. My first husband, Churchill, called me "Bee." At first, as a kid in Chicago, I did not need more than one name, tacked on to the last name of my husband. His name was an asset in my business because he was a well-known crook. Later, and before I went East, I adopted a middle name, Vivienne, for no particular reason except that I liked it. Aside from sounding Frenchy, it was the stage-name of a chorus-girl of whom I was very fond. Then I rang the changes: Miss M. V. Churchill; Mrs. May V. ditto; M. Vivienne.

But as I became more expert and daring, business grew better. I was arrested oftener. It became absolutely necessary to switch to other names. Thus I was a Lattimer, a Kelly, an Avery, and a Wilson, at different times. Some of the last names were semi-legitimate.

I was married twice and was a common-law wife seven times. Hence, I had a "right" to assume the names, Churchill, Sharpe, Guerin, Smith, Considine, Thompson, Gore, Avery, Kelly, Allavato (of Detroit), etc. Some of these names are duplicates, as in the cases of Smith-Considine and Avery-Kelly. Nowadays, I go under the name of Mrs. May Churchill Sharpe.

But to continue with the aliases: I have had more than I can recall. I have been known as Lillian White. This was in Philadelphia. In Brazil, I was known as May Williams. The name, Rose Wilson, once fitted me for a couple of months.

Mary Brown was my name, part of the time, in Detroit. This last was the cause of a near-slip. On one occasion, I had re-crossed the Detroit River from Windsor, Canada, where I had a little business to attend to. It had only netted me about fifty dollars; but that was enough to keep me from being picked up on a vagrancy charge. Just before this lucky touch, I had been completely broke. Before I went to my room, I had an errand to do in Woodward Avenue. Along came a harness-bull and nabbed me, for no reason at all. He had a poor hunch.

I was taken to the Canfield Station. The inspector accused me of having been there before and of being a "nigger hustler." I denied the charge as to time, place, and association. I admitted, however, that I had been at headquarters, thinking I was foxy. The Inspector then piped up that the

record he was examining, in an effort to nail me in a lie, was for a girl of twenty-one. It had been years since I looked that delightful age. This heartened me considerably, so I took a chance and urged that all the "Mary Browns" be looked into. As luck would have it, the search proved I had never been at Canfield before, because all of the Mary Browns were around twenty.

But people in my former profession have other troubles, beside those attending the use of a phony name. For one thing, even the smart cops make mistakes. For another, would-be rivals try to steal your thunder.

One time an actor named Hastings got into a jam because some dame accused him of being too familiar with little girls. It was a blackmailing scheme, probably. The hussie was sent to the House of the Good Shepherd in New York. She said she was Chicago May. I was given that name by the gang, when I first came to New York in 1894. I was never committed to the "Good Shepherd." The newspapers, in describing the affair, said "I" squandered money, throwing it into the street and egging on the poor kids to fight for it. I have given hundreds of dollars to kids, but they did not have to work that way for it.

There was also a very small girl who called herself Chicago May. She was known by most of her gang, however, as Stella Richardson, O'Malley, or Fitzgerald. She got Gold-Toothed May handed to her, once in a while. They say she came from San Francisco. I am told she has been dead for years.

On another occasion, the daughter of a New York baker, named Vechs, got into some sort of trouble in which there was rough stuff. When this got into the papers, I was surprised, one day, to find I was the heroine of the combat.

For years, afterwards, that little Dutch girl's brawls were blamed on me.

An older woman, May Murray, gave herself my name. May Murray was a shoplifter, who could carry two seal-jackets in an elastic arrangement she had under her skirt. The last I heard of her, she was brought back to New York from California, claiming to be the original Chicago May.

There were also two sisters, born in New Jersey, one of whom was supposed to be Chicago May. They were dope-fiends and boosters. I knew many girls in the New York tenderloin, but I could not keep track of all of them. After the Western Gang of which I was a part got operating between America and Europe, I did not always stay long enough in Manhattan to hear of every case in which my name was taken in vain. Sometimes, I only stayed for a couple of days.

At various places in my history, I mention names in connection with the details of incidents. Avoiding repetition as much as possible, except where it is necessary to show a connection with something else, I shall relate, now, some of the facts connected with a few of my many crooked friends and acquaintances:

Gracie Mansfield was one of my friends who was notorious. She never used my name. New Haven was her home. She was the cause of a young man very highly connected being expelled from Yale. After that affair, she was locked up in Auburn Prison for some minor offense. The last time I saw Grace, she was in the New York pen, and hadn't changed very much.

I was acquainted with Adam Worth, or Raymond. As I knew him, he did not amount to much as a crook. Through his ignorance, he made history. One night he was wandering

up and down Bond Street, London, when he happened to cast his eye on Christie's place, where, as I tell elsewhere, my friend, Annie Gleason, failed to lift the string of pearls.

At the time in question, Worth had a pal in jail and had no money to spring him. Suddenly, he got a brilliant idea, for him, that it would be the cheese for him, to break into Christie's art department, steal a painting, sell it to Dan McCarthy, or some fence, for a few pounds, and get his side kick out.

No sooner thought of than put into execution! The shop was robbed, and the undiscriminating Mr. Worth cut a painting out of its frame, rolled it up and took it to the fence. As soon as the foxy fence saw the oil, he knew he had a white elephant on his hands. It was too valuable, however, to return or dispose of, for the time being. The next day, the news was buzzed that the original Duchess of Devonshire, by Gainsborough, had been stolen. There was the divil to pay! Did you ever hear of such dumb luck!

It now became a question of how to hide the elephant, till the storm blew over. The dicks were specially worked up, because the papers were razzing them for inefficiency. To make a long story short, the painting was smuggled out of England, in the bottom of a trunk. It ultimately found its way to Chicago, and laid, there, in Hinky Dink's barrel house for years. Finally an agreement was made by which the famous painting was restored to the owner for twenty thousand dollars and no questions asked.

I have been told the proceeds were divided between the then-possessor of the picture and the three others, but I do not know this of my own knowldge. One thing I do know, however, and that is that the original thief was too much of a nut to get anything. The money did not begin to repre-

sent the cost of cash, time and worriment of all the people engaged in passing it along.

In an effort to complete my pictures of crooks I have known, I shall mention some, here, very briefly:

Kemmy Goldberg and Silverman were fences, in London, friends of Old Dan, the thief who was used by Guerin, one time, to trap me. They were associated with him in a big pearl deal which caused quite a furore at the time.

Grimshaw was a pennyweighter, who got four thousand pounds' worth of wares from a jewelry salesman in the Café Monaco, London.

Bruce and Williams were friends of Becky Hawkins (Cohen), one of the family from whose house Finch, the Protestant, was buried in state, as I describe elsewhere. They fell with her at Brighton, England, for the pennyweight. Bruce was mixed up in a big will-case, in 1916, and got fourteen years for his rascality as a con.

Silent Pat, one of the best international prowlers, is in London at the present time. Among the heavys (stick-up men) were Bill Armstrong, Billie Trott, John Pickett and "Leeds" Bob Williams. The last three fell (did time) for Mappen and Webb's (jewelers) place in Regent Street, London.

Hattie Rock was the Phony Kid's girl. She was the one who brought the news to Charlie Smith and me, in the Soho restaurant, London, that Guerin had been released from the extradition-imprisonment and was on the warpath, looking for us. Within an hour or so, Guerin had been shot and we were in the toils, thanks to lying and prejudice. Hattie was living in Detroit, the last time I was there.

May Bonner went to Auburn Prison, New York, for bigamy. Joe Cherry died on Blackwell's Island, New York.

May Collins and May Hess were creep-joint workers. Nell Welsh committed suicide at Dan the Dude's farm in New Jersey.

I met Margaret Reilly in the New York pen. She got life in Michigan. She had just had a baby in Detroit. I think it was a shame they sentenced her for such a long stretch. She had seven children. I wrote her about the first of this year, but I have received no reply from her. I intend to write some women I know in that State, to see if they cannot do something to help her. She is out on the Farm.

I knew Grace McIntyre in Detroit, having met her in the County Jail, where we both had a private room. She was very good to me, at the time I was sick. I did not, however, care for Gracie's way of living. She lived off the prostitution of poor, unfortunate girls.

Ruby Michaels was a prominent London fence. He was an agent for an old Jew in Johannesburg, South Africa, by the name of Levi. Before Ruby was King of the Fences, the throne was occupied by "Fire Balls," of Petticoat Lane. He died in prison, thanks to a careless Christian wife.

The Cinci Kid, or Oswald, was an Australian, who tried to harm me in London. Charlie Smith worked hard to trace him, for my protection, but he disappeared from view.

When Smith got out of the jam he got into when he was unsuccessful in using the keys to rob the man, as I tell in another place, he was not released because I threatened to blackmail the judge, as the dicks thought. They could not understand how he was sprung, so they made up that cock-and-bull story. The real facts were that Judge Wallace was a kind-hearted man and thought the cops were riding Charlie.

It was his first year on the bench, and he had not had time to become hardened. I had a friend go to see him. Smith

wrote him a letter and told the judge he wanted to go straight back to the States. The police were certainly sore about the outcome, for they were sure they were going to get a conviction, and a long sentence.

I am frequently asked how often I have been arrested. As nearly as I can tell, the score stands as follows: United States, about fifteen times; in France, once; in Brazil, once; and in England, about seven times. Comparing this with the length of stretches, the record is: United States, about two years; France, three years; Brazil, ten days; and England, about ten years and three months. Of the grand total, I served ten years and twenty-two months on charges of which I was innocent. I deserved, however, to get the balance, about three years and five months.

If I had been imprisoned for only what was coming to me, I would have considered myself very lucky, compared with most crooks. I was able to beat the big majority of my arrest-cases. They were very, very few compared with the total number of my forays on society.

Dan Cherry's first wife was Josie Cherry, who was Gleason's first partner. She was a booster and died in the Blackwell's Island pen. Dan's next wife was Maria Hill, a swell booster. Following her, came Molly Davenport, the notorious Toledo madam. Years ago, Dan worked the pennyweight with a partner, in London.

Once he borrowed one of Annie Sullivan's earrings, so as to be able to tell a jeweler that he wanted to match it for his wife, who had lost its mate. It was worth five hundred dollars to him, because he pawned it, at the usual one-third rate, and sent Annie the broker's ticket. Although she was stealing every night, she wanted to have poor Dan pinched, but her lover, George Pell, would not stand for it. Anyhow,

Dan returned the money. He had only borrowed it, because he needed some ready cash to go to work in Paris, at the time, about 1900.

A couple of years ago, Dan Cherry was living in Detroit, running a blind-pig. He was married to a beautiful young Italian girl. Although he was then an old man, he was as straight and well set-up as a young fellow. He and his wife treated me royally. Dan wanted to give me some money; but I did not accept this kind offer. I was steering clear of the police at the time.

The misuse of my name has been funny at times. My father's name has been given as F. Leander Vechs, the Dutch baker, who was the father of the Mary I referred to. Ethel Dowdell was accused of stealing twenty-eight thousand dollars from a gent in New York, which was gratifyingly large, even for "Chicago May"; but I was in Europe at the time. Mabel Williams might have kept my name out of it, though they charged her with only stealing a toy Japanese terrier. I am not fond of toy dogs. A Great Dane is more in my line. I like Police Dogs, too, but they insult that noble brute by giving him such a name. Avery Kelly was so afraid of being mixed up with the real Chicago May, that he told the dicks I was Mary O'Malley, one time, when we were pinched.

Walter Jones was an actor who was connected with the show, "1492," which ran during the time of the Chicago World's Fair. It was said I took money from him without his consent, according to the newspapers. I didn't, and he didn't say I did. I nicked a naval officer one time who was fool enough to tell me his right name. I helped him out when he got into a jam by telling the newspaper boys his name was "Samuel L. Williams."

The Gerry Agents never got after me in New York for

teaching children to be pickpockets. That is a newspaper canard. My maiden name was never Googuette, and I never was the adopted daughter of Mrs. Rix, a museum proprietor's wife.

If you consult the newspaper files you will find I have been accused of being successively: Richards, Fitzgerald, Miller, Fletcher, Omerly, Smith, Nelson and O'Donnell—to mention a few of them.

But my victims were the clever guys at handing out names for themselves, when they had the gall to appear against me! One innocent clergyman said he was a salesman by the name of Louis Rosenblatt. The cops asked him if he was a Jew, and laughed when they put the question. I asked him who he was salesman for, and he tried to freeze me by saying he did not want the firm to get mixed up with low women.

When I stole, it was generally money I took. The reason was that the fences got most of the chattel profits. If the law would make these vultures more vulnerable by revising its rules and allowing more testimony of, by, for, and against conspirators, there would be more convictions and less crime. Usually, I did my business with such cattle through third persons. A pawnbroker at King's Cross, Whitechapel, London, was a fence, but, for that matter, many pawnbrokers used to be fences.

Becky Lockett did time in Brighton, Birmingham and Liverpool. She was mixed up in one job in which she was charged with stealing four thousand pounds' worth of jewelry. Detective Inspector Stockley, the one who let his imagination run riot in my case, for the Guerin shooting, was the bête noir for Becky. He could only see me as a blackmailer and he went the limit using my letters. He, at least, had not the vivid imagination of the New York dick who said I had

jaws like a bull-dog and bit men's jewelry out of their cravats while hugging them in cabs, or while dancing with them. Becky's husband, Jimmy, was the one who got the pigeon-ruby I mentioned.

Poor, dear Countess Markievicz, my fellow prisoner in Aylesbury, died in July, 1927. She was a real Irish patriot, sacrificing money, position, health, and freedom for liberty. After all had been gained, except the bare shadow of independence, the shanty-element turned her down at the polls, she who had done so much for them. What between those ingrates and the English, she died a martyr, broken in body and spirit.

Old Pat Hill, or, as he was better-known, Pat Crowe, was one of the best crooks in his day, for all-round work. He went in mostly for burglary, but did not despise the lighter branches of the profession, like prowling. He, like most of the other members of the underworld, rose to eminence only to decline until he lost out completely, begging at the L steps in New York.

Some years ago, he and Uncle Barney Young, and another old man, were sent to the Detroit House of Correction. While they were doing their stretch (term of imprisonment), Mrs. Young worked at the Detroit Country Club as a waitress, supporting herself, and helping to support the wives of the other two men. Barney's wife even took in washing in her own home, which she owned in her own right.

Now Pat Crowe had a chicken wife, who thought more of pleasure than principle. She had the brass to stage parties in the Young home, even having a negro as one of her guests. Meanwhile, the wife of poor Barney was out drudging. Mrs. Crowe was young enough to be Pat's granddaughter.

Years ago the beauteous Marie Hill was the wife of the

then young, handsome Pat. She was a high-class shoplifter. Forty years ago, she boosted, wearing a bustle and a bonnet tied under her chin. But styles change. The flapper-wife sent to New York for her hats. Detroit millinery was not good enough. Things are different, in more ways than one, nowadays.

May (I never knew her last name) was a clever woman who played the high heel (begged) over in the East Side, New York. What that baby did not know, in that game, wasn't worth knowing. She could, and did, ring all the changes. The police were always one jump, or one day, behind her. If she did not have an infant in arms, she was the wan, pathetic wife of a crippled husband, dutifully sticking by him in sickness and sorrow, for the edification of a world which was too lazy to investigate for fraud and too ashamed to appear niggardly. Sometimes she herself was crippled; sometimes only blind. Her voice was worth a mint, so meek, so modest, and plaintive.

Anna Robinson was a lovely American girl who made a hit in Europe. In Paris, she used to wear a neckband which was said to have been given her by Leopold, the late King of the Belgians. It was a beautiful piece of jewelry, studded with all sorts of precious stones, so that it sparkled with all the colors of the rainbow. Our mob used to call it the King's Dog Collar.

Anna used to pal with the girl high up in society, who went under the name of Mrs. Wilson. Both of them were high-grade in their crooked work. Neither of them would stoop to anything low, by which I simply mean they only fished for large suckers and used nothing but the most expensive tackle in their angling.

But what was the end of all this magnificent success in

crookery! This society man's mistress lost out, she came back to New York and lived in Chinatown. At first, she put on airs and was queenly in the use of money and the hop. But she sank lower and lower, until she became a regular dope-fiend and bum, so poor that she would sell herself to the devil to get a few dollars to satisfy her cravings.

The sweet-faced Anna Robinson, formerly of *la crème du demi-monde,* died in the Metropolitan Hospital on Blackwell's Island. I think her poor sister buried her. Poverty and disease had vanquished her whom the highest in society had worshiped. She had become an incurable dope-fiend, also.

The Phony Kid, husband of Hattie Rock, was Harry Carlton, son of a Pittsburgh doctor. He was the greatest pennyweighter that ever lived. Charlie Smith and he did time in the Breakwater in South Africa. John, the Waiter, and he did a long stretch in Edinburgh. Once Annie Gleason and the Kid tried to hire out with the diamond cutters in Holland, but a Chicago business man recognized Annie, and the police chased the pair out of the country.

If the Kid hadn't been full of dope most of the time, he would have been a wonder. Hearing somebody say he would steal a red-hot stove, he proved it just to show off. Once he stole shoes for his wife, which he would have considered right enough if they hadn't turned out to be all left-footed.

CHAPTER XXXIII

TEMPORARY ADDRESSES

One time, I got into a jam, over in New York. I had no money, so I borrowed carfare and went to Philadelphia to see if I could change my luck. All I had was a tailored-suit and some furs. I picked up a couple of men and robbed them the first night, so I had enough to rent a room and get something to eat. Then I started to work at my trade. I must say this for the Quaker City cops, that none of them ever asked me for a penny. It was a cheap town, but the overhead was low; so, on the whole, the profits were as great as in other, more flashy, cities.

But I had bad luck on this trip. I got the flu. Every time I appeared to be getting better, I would catch a fresh cold. I had to go out to steal to pay my rent and board. When I was almost down and out, I borrowed fifty dollars from a lawyer on my promise to get some decent work and go straight. I paid him back the money, but I didn't go straight. On the contrary, I got better and worked the city until I was able to save nearly a thousand dollars. The dicks did not know me, so I had a pretty free hand. I returned to New York fairly prosperous.

On another occasion, I beat it to Philly when the bulls chased me out of a New York domicile. On this occasion, I had a man with me, and opened a creep-joint in 10th Street. We had the use of the whole house, and brought the Johns

in through the alley, so that it was very hard for them to find the house again.

One night I met a wise sucker from New York. He told me he was a corset salesman, and wanted to know if he could fit me with a pair. I told him not to bother about the old gag, because I did not wear such harness. This was on an Easter Eve. We passed a confectionery store, and he bought me a large chocolate egg. I had "Alice" put on it, because I told the guy it was for my little daughter, for whose sake, only, I was willing to run the streets. When I told him I was not like the Chestnut Street gold-diggers, and would be satisfied with whatever he could afford to give me, he became very enthusiastic.

I rushed him hard. He hung up his clothes, almost over the head of the man I had planted in the room. The creeper got four hundred dollars, in the twinkle of an eye, and slid out. When he had salted away the dough, down stairs, he started pounding on the front door. I yelled, "It's the owner"; and the John got scared. Then I leaned out of the window and said I would be down in a few minutes. In the meanwhile, the sucker was ready and I sneaked him out through the alley to the little back street.

Inside of an hour Mr. John was back, was met at the door by my man, and wanted to come in because he had "dropped something." The creep said he couldn't let him in, that he only roomed there, and that the landlady, a white-haired, very old woman, was out. Next morning we got a letter addressed to the "Man of the House," saying the sucker would call at the house the following night.

I went out that same afternoon, met an old sea-captain in Green's Hotel, 8th and Chestnut Streets, and nicked him for nearly seven hundred and fifty dollars. My fellow touched

him by coming into the house with a dead-latch key. He must have been frightened at seeing so much money, all at once, because he dropped a century on the floor. I promptly stepped on it and retrieved it. When I got rid of the old bird, we left immediately for little old New York. No more was heard by me from the captain or the guy who was going to have his rights the following evening.

The next time I worked in Philly, my parole from Blackwell's Island had expired. I wanted to go to a nice, decent sort of a place, where I could save some money, and tackle bigger and more exciting things, with a prosperous front. My man and I got an apartment in North 17th Street. We lived quietly there for some time, picking up a few dollars, once in a while.

Then I moved down to 11th Street near Sansom, and I cleaned up everything that came my way. I never had one pick-up. How I escaped, and so close to New York, too, I cannot understand. I lived in the streets and in the lobbies of the big hotels, especially in the Walton and the Adelphia, right in the center of the city.

When Smedley Butler came to clean out the town, I was running a creep-joint in 11th Street. He got the police so nervous that the crooks had a comparatively easy time of it. The cop on the beat, seeing me with various men in the street, told me I would have to stop taking Johns to my house. I thanked him and stopped. It was a furnished room establishment. I moved everything of value out of my rooms, and had my trailer follow the suckers. Then I had three keys made, one for my victim, one for the trailer, and one for myself.

I would stroll along Walnut or Chestnut Streets and the cross-streets. When I selected a John, I would put him wise,

tell him the town was shut up tight, and give him a key. He would go where I sent him and up into my reception room. I followed, later, with an armful of groceries, generally bread and potatoes, which I gave to the landlady, afterwards.

Sometimes I would steer several Johns this way, in one evening, always having different kinds of groceries on my arm. The cop might have got suspicious, if he met me several times with the same sort of stuff. Sometimes he would not see me at all. He and the other dicks had a blue-funk on account of the General of Marines. The cop couldn't object. I was always alone on the street. If the sucker was timid, the trailer was at the door, and would say, "If you are Miss Wilson's friend, walk right up, second story, back."

One night I met an Englishman, from New York, and got more than a grand from him. I just grabbed my little bag, left him with a swell package of eats, a half-quart of moonshine, a fifty dollar bill, and some change. I wanted the poor fellow to have enough to pay his hotel bill and his fare back to New York. I left on the next train for Erie, Pa., and slept soundly all night.

After working in Detroit for some time, with varying success, I decided to go back to Philadelphia to visit the Sesqui-Centennial. I was there before the big show was fully installed for visitors. The trip was delightful and profitable. I met some wonderful Shriners, and I am sure they remember me. After having worked pretty steadily, I decided to take a much-needed rest.

The night before I was to go back to my man in Detroit, I was walking along Chestnut Street, window-shopping. Two ugly looking brutes appeared to be following me. I went into a Childs' restaurant, at the corner of 10th Street, to get rid

of them. They trailed me when I came out. When I looked into Bonwit and Teller's window, they stood beside me. As I turned to go home, they wanted to know what I was doing. Because I told them I was no hustler, they pinched me.

The next morning, I had a lawyer when I came before the judge in the Misdemeanants' branch of the Municipal Court, at 12th and Wood Streets. My representative and I had never seen each other before. I had 'phoned him because one of his fellow club members had recommended him to me. He did not know I was Chicago May. I convinced him I had done nothing to be arrested for, though I confessed I had a record which would hurt me if I was held.

What does this gent, who looked and acted like Abraham Lincoln, do, but get up, tell the judge it was an outrage for cops to pinch a lady who was doing nothing, even if she was a crook, and talk very friendly-like to His Honor, who appeared to know him well. Blessed if the judge didn't discharge me in the custody of the lawyer. I beat it out of the city.

This arrest is one sample of the inaccuracy of my official record. It is not in it.

I was given an indefinite sentence to the penitentiary on Blackwell's Island, New York, as the result of the Rumanian falsely swearing I had beaten and robbed him, whereas my trailer had only punched him, in the street, for pestering me. I made up my mind to take matters philosophically. This, notwithstanding I was sore at the injustice of the commitment. But, then, I felt it could be no worse than the other, longer one at Aylesbury, England. The Prison Commissioners were pretty good to the women, giving most of them twelve to fifteen months for a "go" out of their three years.

When my turn came, I got thirty months, virtually the

whole term. The prison officials hesitated in telling me the sad news, but I laughed. However, just the same, I got busy. Mrs. Lilly, the lady-superintendent wrote to a Commissioner for me. The next time he came to the prison, I had a private interview with him. I told him the truth, everything. He must have believed me, because he started right away to try to get me a parole. By that time, I had done nearly six months.

Commissioner Lord, one-time deputy commissioner of police, was harder to convince than Kruger; but at my suggestion, he asked Edwin England, the officer in the case, what he thought about it. The report was satisfactory. When the Commissioners were willing to parole me, Judge Frescie wouldn't sign the papers. The matter hung fire for nearly twenty months. Finally His Honor signed, on condition that I left the State of New York.

While I was on Blackwell's (now Welfare) Island, I worked hard. For six months, I treadled at a sewing machine. The rest of the time, I was the dentist's assistant. Dr. Bellaine treated me fine. This work was not hard. The food was plentiful. If it had been well-cooked, it would have been better than that of the average poor family, outside. But the trouble was the chef belonged to the old régime and thought any sort of cooking was good enough for the prisoners.

Mrs. Lilly tried hard to raise the morale of both prisoners and matrons. She had plenty to contend with.

While I was dickering with a tough Italian about joining him in a dope-running and peddling ring, I had occasion to go to Boston. Mind you, I was on parole from the New York pen. I pulled several jobs in the Athens of America, and, once, came near being arrested and caught in a parole-break. The way it came about was this:

I had become acquainted with two young Danes, very swell boys, brothers. We were the best of friends. The lot of us were out together for two days, once. I nicked them for some money; but they thought they had spent it. In fact, they never actually counted their money, and never knew exactly how much they had. I became tired, after the second day, and went to my room. The boys knew where I lived.

Late that night, there was a pounding on the door. The landlady looked out of the window; and there was one of the Danes and a uniformed policeman. She brought them upstairs, and I asked what was wrong. The Dane accused me of stealing his watch. I was scared sick, but not on account of the watch. My red parole-card was lying on the bureau.

As soon as I could, I sidled across the room, got the card, and slipped it to the landlady. Fortunately, the cop did not get wise. He was very polite and merely asked me if I objected to him searching the bureau drawers. "Help yourself," said I. After he had completed his examination, he asked everybody to step out of the room excepting me.

"What's coming now?", thought I.

"Look here, Miss," he said to me, in an ingratiating way, "give me the watch and all bets are off. If you don't want to trust me that much," he continued, "just help me, and leave it where I can find it."

With tears in my eyes, I told the bull everything about the party. I urged him, for God's sake, to search the Dane, and search his room, at his and his brother's apartment. I told him, on my word of honor, I would wait where I was until he returned. The cop, after a little more persuasion, left with my late companion to go search him and his room.

As soon as they were gone, the landlady and I started to pack my things for a quick getaway. She knew that I would

ride, innocent or not, if I was arrested, with that parole staring me in the face. I was just about to start, when back the cop came with the Dane, mad as a boar with a sore ear.

The guy had rolled up the watch in his handkerchief and stuffed it into his back pocket. Maybe the copper didn't kick the Dane a good, stout, swift one, and chase him. Through that policeman's kindness of heart, I had been saved from having to finish my term in jail. Did I forget to reward him? I rather think not.

After getting tired of trying to find my man, Kelly, as elsewhere recounted, to wreak vengeance on him, I went to Toronto, Canada, to try to forget what a simp I had been. I met an Englishman at the Queen's Hotel. I took him into camp for two hundred pounds. But aside from a couple of little touches, I did not stay long.

During the time I was under cover, because I had stolen jewelry from a salesman, to whom I had been introduced by an actor, the details of which I have told, I was sent by Detective Becker to New Haven, Connecticut. I got money out of several students and had fights with some of them. They were boisterous kids, and could give cards and spades to many rounder-guys who claim to be hard-boiled.

At a very jolly party, I got a seal ring from one of these young fellows. We were drinking champagne punch, and he got disgustingly tight. It turned out the ring was a very old family heirloom. The next day, there was the divil to pay. A fraternity brother of the black-sheep, came to see me about returning the ring. He, like a yap, explained how valuable the plain gold circlet was. I would have given it up for the asking, before that. But now, my price went up. I asked a thousand dollars flat, and a signed statement that the ring was returned voluntarily, without promise of reward.

I got my demands in full, but the town became so hot for me, I was glad when I could go back to my gang in New York, the jeweler having been satisfied. I ought to have asked for more, because the guy could not stand publicity, but he was kept so short, by his family that the fraternity brothers had to chip in to help him out. I hope they were repaid, with interest, when the young man came into his estate. I hope, also, the young man learnt a lesson not to play with strange ladies.

When I was in Paris, on one trip, I was introduced to Old Jim Coffee, whose right name was Turner. His wife was known as the American Citizen, though she, unlike her husband, was not American-born. A Mrs. Wormsley, who worked with a swell mob in Belgium, gave me the introduction. This was after she had helped George Williams rob a jewelry store in Brussels. If the pair had not thrown the empty cases into the sea at Ostend, and if the tide hadn't washed them back, she wouldn't have got five years for the affair.

As I was saying, I was introduced to Coffee and helped him pull off a game for which he was noted. He wanted me to fill in, because the dame, who played nurse to his wife, was ill. Mrs. Coffee was naturally lame. That was the only honest-to-goodness thing about the works.

She came over to Paris, from London and I took her, in a wheel chair, into a jewelry store. I was dressed like an English nurse. The old man was rigged up like a Church-of-England bishop. The wife felt faint, so the Right Reverend begged to be excused from purchasing that day, because his better-half was very delicate.

We had rented an apartment in the Champs Elysées, where, to-day, you would have to be a millionaire to afford quarters. Our place had a getaway from the bedroom. That

is why it was selected. The next day, after calling at the jewelry store, we sent the old lady home to London.

His Lordship, the Bishop, then went back to the store and asked, as a great favor, that they send an attendant with a tray of diamonds for Madam to select from. In due time, the shopman arrived at our rooms. I, the trained nurse, met the man and parked him in the reception room. The Reverend came out and explained that his wife was in bed, having had one of her bad days. The old gent, certainly, could speak beautiful French.

The man parted with his tray to me. I went to the bedroom. The Bishop followed. We admired the stones in audible English, all the while changing into our coster outfits. Down the back stairs went old Coffee, and the diamonds, dressed in corduroys and earrings, with a red handkerchief round his neck. I was at his heels, wearing a large knitted shawl and white apron, with a black straw hat and brogues.

We kept up the chatter until we donned our togs—and then for the station. I suppose the shop-man waited and waited and got nervous waiting. Imagine him finally summoning up enough courage to enter the sick lady's boudoir! No doubt, the robbery was finally reported, but we never heard any more about it.

Coffee worked this trick in various garbs from priest and parson, to nobleman, military and naval officer, giving enough variety of plot, in different cases, to keep it from becoming too monotonous and co-incidental. Scotland Yard had plenty of his disguises sent back from France. The English dicks could do nothing to help their French brothers. The offense was not extraditable at that time. Coffee was a subject of Her Britannic Majesty, having served in the army.

Eddie Guerin, by a newspaper ad., lured me to Dan Mc-

Carthy's place in Newton Street, Holborn. He was jealous of Baby Thompson, with whom I was then living, and would not give me up. I was so afraid of the man that I became his slave, until I could make my escape without fear of immediate punishment. He sent my maid, Skinner, for my clothes and took me to the Ivanhoe Hotel, in London. I was too afraid to yell for help, and it was against the crook code to squeal. This was before the dicks had discovered Eddie, arrested and held him for the extradition proceedings, all of which he blamed on me.

McCarthy had a small store on the first floor and lived upstairs. It was a veritable den of thieves. His old woman, Julia, was a cripple. She was constantly telling her rosary beads, praying. It was funny, at times, to be there and hear her. She would get as far, maybe, as "Holy Mary, Mother of God," and happen to look out of the window. Tap, tap, tap, would go her cane on the floor above, and she would shout down the stairs, "Dan, Dan, Dan, God blimey, the elbows (police) are across the street."

Guerin had my trunks packed by Skinner and took me to Aachen, Germany. Before we left for that place, we went out in public, eating; but I dared not try to escape. On one occasion, when we were dining at Thatcher's, he drew a gun and said he was going to shoot me, but changed his mind when I reminded him that I had saved his life by raising money to spring him from the Devil's Island settlement on the mainland, at Cayenne.

Anyhow, we got to Aachen and put up at the Hotel Monopole, in Jacobstrasse. I took the baths. The carnival was in full swing. Eddie tried to rob a jewelry store and failed. Then he and Ed Rice went on to Italy. I was told to stay put and that I would get a fur coat and be taken to Norway, as a

reward. He wanted to keep me away from Baby Thompson.

While he was gone I got acquainted with a young German officer. He took me to Cologne and West Baden. I robbed him of small amounts, during the entire trip, but he was poor, and the pickings were not so good. Back I came to my headquarters. Along came a letter from Guerin, ordering me to join him in Italy.

Instead of that, I went back to London and rejoined Baby Thompson. I preferred him to the domineering Guerin. The Babe was a good fellow, always had plenty of money, and had a dandy car. At first, he was raving mad at me, but I promised him never to go with Guerin again, so we made up. In the meanwhile, however, Eddie got back to Germany and sent me the fur coat from Berlin, where he had made a haul, the Italian trip not having been so successful.

Skinner phoned me one day to go to her apartment, and when I got there, Eddie was waiting for me, mad as a hornet. This was the cold Spring of, I think, 1905. He beat me up and took away the fur coat. I trailed Eddie and his accomplice, John the Waiter, until I saw where they pawned the coat. I put a stop-order on the coat to prevent them from getting it out, but I never got it. This was the time Thompson sent me to South America to avoid trouble with Guerin, who was making threats that he was going to disfigure me, so that my face would never lure another man. I was to be made hideous to look at.

After I had served my long stretch in Aylesbury, England, and had started to work again in this country, I heard of an opportunity of getting even with the English for the way they had treated me, and of nicking one of the aristocrats who had been to blame for my unjust sentence. How I got this information is another matter. Suffice it to say that I

got it. I went over to England on the passport of a Red Cross nurse, fooling the American authorities. I was in London several weeks, fooling Scotland Yard. The John came my way, and I and a "friend" of his trimmed him, good and proper.

My share more than paid all my expenses and left me considerable over, so much so, that I did not have to do much work for a year afterwards. It is too dangerous to give the name of the sucker, the event happened too recently. If he reads this, he will know, and he will know what a bally ass he was.

Once when I was down at Brighton for a few weeks, taking the air, and enjoying the promenade, I happened to spy a very nifty coat in Henry Hilder's tailor store, 14 Trafalgar Street. As I was having a vacation, and did not want to work, I would not go steal the coat myself. But I wanted it just the same. I waited until I met a boy, who was a real burglar, and asked him if he would do me a favor. When he said he would, I told him of my craving for the coat, which I showed him. He said it was too small-potatoes to bother with, and offered to buy me one. Nothing would do, but I must have that one, and it had to be stolen. He got it for me in the way prescribed, and it cost me more than the value of the coat for the meal and liquor I stood him.

I shall never forget Armistice Day, 1918. Temporarily, I was in Philadelphia. By way of celebration, I trimmed a sucker that night, in a door-way, in Brandywine Street, near where the Harmonie Singing Society used to have its club house. He had more than five hundred dollars in large bills which I got. If I had had more time, I might have gotten more. That same night, I robbed a so-called Russian nobleman in a hotel at 9th and Chestnut Streets. He must have

been robbed before, by some Bolshevik, for I only pulled a couple of dirty ten-spots out of him.

At times, when I have been in Brighton, the English Atlantic City, we used to steal on the ocean-front where the fashionable stores were. On one occasion, Kid Wilson stole four valuable sable neck-pieces, while I was fitting on a blouse. That is the way we used to get our own wearing apparel. We never bought any, there.

Pauline Washbourne and myself used to sit on the beach at night and start crying when some old duffer would come along. If the limey sat down beside us, to console us, Paulie would get his pocketbook before you could say Jack Robinson. The two of us worked this racket at different watering places, with varying success.

One night we went to Yarmouth, famous for bloaters and for being the scene of some of David Copperfield's experiences. This was a tough place, something like what Coney Island used to be. Well, an Irishman came to console me. I was so slow with my sleight-of-hand, or the Irishman's eye was quicker than my hand, that he caught me with the poke in my mit. Biff! He hit me over the head with his cudgel, just as effectively as if it was a shillalah.

He got his pocketbook back all right; and we bawled each other out. If I hadn't been so bunged up, and he had been rich enough or prominent enough, to make it worth while, I would have stood by until a cop had arrested us. Then I would have framed him by planting something of mine on him and badgering him. It might have developed into blackmail. The result was, however, after the battle, that I had to have several stitches put into my head. I bear the mark, to this day, in the shape of a scar which, fortunately, is covered by the hair of my shock head.

CHAPTER XXXIV

TOWARD THE SETTING SUN

Although I had been in Detroit frequently, from the beginning of my career as a crook, and onwards, I had never stopped there long enough to pull more than one job, and then beat it. In the early days, there were no automobiles. The business section was small, and the dwelling houses were mostly built on separate lots, with plenty of in-between space. In 1899, there was one gas machine in town and the citizens used to go to the curb to watch it when it ambled by. The Griswold House was the principal hostelry, comfortable, but not up-to-date.

I did not really settle down in Detroit, to follow my trade, until the early part of 1924. By that time, the town had become a city. The hotels were big and modern, and business was active. Money was being made, and money was being spent. The field was ripe for the reaper; but my sun had begun to set. What I lacked in youth and energy, however, I more than made up in the cunning of experience.

I was very careful and played safe. No one knew who I was. I played a lone hand. Occasionally, I would be pinched for loitering or for that much-abused charge of "disorderly conduct," which only means what it says. The law is very explicit, but police and magistrates define it to include nearly everything. Few appeals are taken. The fact that I was stealing never entered the heads of the cops. There was no com-

plaint from the Johns. I stopped taking a man's whole roll, though I would take liberally. The result was that I began to save money and have visions, once more, of retiring from the racket, for good.

After a while my arrests became more numerous. I did not belong to the syndicate. Certain officers, bondsmen and lawyers were in cahoots. They made a fat living off the unfortunate girls, the bloodsuckers and scoundrels. The business of the vice-squad was to pick up fifty or sixty girls, one night a week, for investigation. This night was timed for Saturday, when the prisoners would be held over for a hearing until Monday, unless they got out on a writ. The procurers, or agents, knew this, and so did the shyster-lawyers. Round to the Detention House they would go, and collect from thirty-five to fifty dollars from the girls who could afford, or raise, the money.

The lawyer would then take the writs to a judge to sign. Most of the other judges would be out, to Lake St. Clair, for the week-end. By the time the vice squad was off duty, Saturday night, the girls would be out again, working in the streets. They had to hustle for their wages and the costs and expenses of the law. They continued to work until the next pick-up, hoping and praying it would be far enough off so that they could get a little ahead of the game.

All the girls were registered at the Board of Health and had their "slips" sent in. Most of the girls visited a woman doctor who made a fat income, because, in addition, she examined and reported on the girls who did not stand in with the system. No woman was allowed to go out on a writ unless her slip was in the hands of the Board of Health, certifying that she was in good condition. I was never registered in Detroit, or in any other city, because that was not

my line. Although I have often been accused of being an ordinary street-walker, it was very seldom that a John ever got as far as being intimate with me.

I never laid out my money for writs, but just took my chance with the judge. Except in a very few instances, I always got off or was put on probation. You can well imagine, if the judge had known me, he would hardly have put me on probation. I worked inconspicuously. My days for fame and the spotlight were over.

One day I went down Park Boulevard and picked up a swell guy in a car. Before we got very far I had taken his leather. We were parked near a gasoline station. Up came a Ford law-car. Two burly bulls jumped on us. I had presence of mind enough to put the wallet into the John's outside coat-pocket.

They scared the poor sucker, so badly, that he ups and tells them he was taking me to a hotel and had promised to give me ten dollars. Both of us were taken to the police station, and that was my first arrest in Detroit. I cried and whimpered. The matrons were very sorry and I was put with the first offenders.

The next day, in court—it was more like a cheap burlesque show than a place for the trial of criminal cases—the girls in the bull-pen kept saying to me, "Get a lawyer. This judge is a bugger." I looked him over, decided he was a good, decent Irishman, and passed up the idea of wasting money on a lawyer. When my case was called, there was my John. He took the stand and told the court the yarn.

"Well," says the judge, looking at me, "what have you to say?"

I told him I was a hard-working, respectable woman, that my husband deserted me, with two small children, and

that I had come to Detroit, trying to get a job of some sort. When he asked the cops if they had ever seen me before, they said "No."

"She tells me a very straightforward story," said His Honor. "She doesn't look or act like one of these prostitutes."

Here the cop made a tactical error, saying, "But she was willing to go with a man for money."

The judge snapped out, "There are hundreds of women in Detroit, and elsewhere, who accept money from men, and they wouldn't thank you for calling them hustlers, or street walkers—*discharged.*" When I walked out, I didn't have enough money in my pocket to even ride home in a taxicab.

It was not long, however, before I was again in funds. I worked more cautiously than ever. I scraped and saved, never spending more than I earned, even when business was bad. On occasions, I made worth-while hauls, but I would not allow myself to squander them. My ambition was to get back to my former estate, in the matter of clothing and jewels. A crook, like any other business man, must generally put up a front to succeed well.

Bit by bit, I was forging ahead, when I ran into an Italian contractor, who looked good to me. He worked hard, made a good living, was not too sanctimonious, liked me, and could give me the background I needed. We started to live together.

Each worked; and both of us made more money than we did when we were playing lone hands. I was generous with him, and he was equally liberal with me. When one was dull, the other was prospering. It was seldom that we both were playing in hard luck at the same time.

Notwithstanding he was a pretty good guy, I thought, at

times, he had his hand out too frequently. The greed for the easy dollar is a great temptation for all but the strongest-minded of men. Among other things, I bought him a car, and a radio set and opened up a booze-joint for him. He worked steadily enough.

Once more I decided to go straight. I had an apartment, where I lived with my man. His brother boarded with us. It was a great relief to settle down, and just keep house. One day, going to the store for household supplies, a young dick stopped me. I told him to go on about his own business, that I was a decent, respectable married woman. He accused me of being Irish, which I promptly admitted, and added that I was proud of it. Then he asked me how long I had been in the country. I laughed in his face and told him six months, kidding him.

When I wouldn't produce any papers, because I couldn't and didn't have to, he and two other dumbbells arrested me. They took me, in a Ford, to the Canfield Station, charging me with violation of the immigration laws. When I got before the desk-sergeant, I could hardly keep a straight face. He wanted to know "What the hell sort of a case" this was. He told the dicks I wasn't an alien and said they were fools.

They insisted, however, that I had admitted that I was only in this country for six months, adding a few things I had never said. Anyhow, the wagon was called. It was early in the afternoon, and I had only my house dress on. The cop, on the wagon, said I was a pretty decent-looking woman to be charged with a crime. I said, "what crime?" When he looked at his papers and saw the crime was "violating the immigration laws," he nearly fell off the seat laughing, and tittered all the way to the Detention Home. He was Irish, too!

In a few hours, a Federal official came along. I was crying and laughing, at the ridiculousness of the charge, and from fear of an investigation, which would expose me to the Detroit authorities. It did not take me long, however, to convince Uncle Sam's servant that the dicks had pulled a bonehead. He was more peeved than I was when he ordered my release. I was tickled to death.

After the lawyer got me out of the unlawful pinch in Philadelphia, I went home to Detroit, imitating, as nearly as might be, the flight of a crow. The reason for this was what I hadn't told the lawyer—that I was on probation in Detroit. I knew the Philadelphia courts were very methodical, investigating their cases.

Before I even had a chance to get out of Philly a woman from the court was round to see me. I gave her my right address in Detroit and the name of the man I said I was the wife of. My friend had a good name, and the apartment was very respectable. I was afraid they would start a check-up, and I decided it was best to tell the truth, not having anything to hide in that respect. It is true, however, that I spoke in broken English and gave my age as ten years less than was right. They sent this poor description to the Detroit Probation Office.

I took a train home, via Buffalo, and landed in the Michigan Central Station, Detroit, at 2 A. M. My man met me and took me to our apartment, in his car. About 9 o'clock that morning the local probation officer was there to inquire about me. She was surprised to see me back so soon, slapped me on the back and told me never to go East again. She told me how the manager told her I had gone to New York to visit my "sister."

As she did not know me, she was not wise to the fact that

there was a warrant out for me, under another name, for violation of probation. She said she was going to write Philadelphia and explain to them that they had made a mistake, that I had a husband who had a good character and a good home. It seems that society is getting so complicated, with reform, uplift, and law, that the authorities are not able to unravel the twisted skein.

And now comes one of the bad breaks in my life—or perhaps it was a good break. I was sick; I was very sick. My man got a thousand dollars out of our bank and gave it to me to go to Chicago to have an operation. As I have explained elsewhere, I simply loafed round the Windy City and spent the money. When I came back he was sore because I had not done as promised. We had a fight so I took five hundred dollars, left him, and opened a nice apartment in Stimson Street, with another girl.

I was too sick to work. One Sunday morning, I went to the drug store, in 2d Boulevard, to get some medicine. It was in August 1926. A car drove up with two rum-runners from New York. They knew me simply as a girl who knocked about, not as Chicago May. They were driving my way and gave me a friendly lift. The car was full of all kinds of booze.

Up came a law-car, stopped us, and asked the boys if I had solicited them. They had guilty consciences and became frightened. Seeing this, I tried to make a getaway. The cops ran after, and caught, me. The boys escaped, in the confusion. To accomplish this, I had "confessed" I had been soliciting.

At that, I might have beaten the case, only the probation-woman, who sat near the bench, recognized me, told Judge Brennan I was a very bad woman and that there was a war-

rant out for me for violation of probation. "Sixty days," said the old dog.

"I hope you are stiff up there," I cried, "until I come out of the can."

When I went to the bull-pen, a lawyer shouted, and asked if any of the girls wanted to get out on appeal. "Get me out," I said, and I handed him a hundred dollars. He couldn't get a judge to sign the release until morning, so I had to go to the House of Correction.

Of all the jails I ever struck, that was the worst. Blacks and whites had to sleep together on the floor, on straw mattresses. This is the place where Loretta Lee, the girl bandit, died from exposure. After a sleepless night, I was sitting in the yard waiting to get out. Along came a matron and told me I was going to work in the laundry. I told her I was not going to work, but was going out as soon as my lawyer arrived.

She told me I would have to do as I was told. I explained that I was sick and told her she could have me examined to prove whether or no I was telling her the truth. She simply said, "Sick or not, you are going to work in the laundry, or go to the dungeon." Sure enough, they took me to the dungeon! I laid down on the flags and fell asleep from exhaustion. Before I woke, the door opened. I was shaken and told that my lawyer had arrived.

"You must be a tough bird," volunteered the matron; "but if you ever come back here again, we will take the toughness out of you."

I flipped back, "You wouldn't have a job if the likes of me didn't come here, unless you did scrubbing for a living. You are too ugly to catch a man and too dumb to steal."

The matron who took me from the dungeon told me to

pick up a scrap of paper I had thrown on the floor. She wanted to show off in front of the other girls. I told her to pick it up herself, so that was all she got for her wasted bluff.

Imagine my surprise, when I got to the office, to be told that there was a detainer against me for violation of probation. After all the times I had been guilty and escaped this charge, they had finally tumbled to me. I was taken to the County Jail in the hurry-up wagon.

This institution was very fine for a jail. The matrons were very nice to me. A dope-fiend who remembered me from New York pen, tipped me off about the chief matron, Mrs. Rexford, a good woman. She saw that I was sick and insisted that I be removed to the Receiving Hospital. I was treated there for a week, when the doctors discovered that I had kidney-stones.

The chief surgeon, also named Rexford, but not related to the chief matron, said to me: "You are going to die in a few months, if you are not operated on. You have one chance in a hundred for a successful operation. You have waited too long. It is impossible for you to live with that quarry in your side."

I had a hunch that this doctor was all to the good, so I told him to go to it. He laughed, said "all right," and in a few days I was on the operating table.

I had no fear of death. My vitality was at a low ebb. I had little hope of pulling through, but I still had the will to live. I saw neither priest nor parson, for I feared a bad judge more than I did God. They strapped me on the operating table, gave me an anesthetic, and I remembered no more for about ten hours. I was told they took me from one ward to another, fearing I would pass out.

The coming back was worse than the going out. The first thing I remember was a nurse remonstrating with me for pulling off a towel and leggings, trying to toss them on the floor. My condition was good for a few days, and then I had a relapse.

Now came the struggle with death. When I felt I was slipping, I would tell them, and they and I fought off the enemy. The doctors and nurses were wonderful, particularly a good-looking one, Dr. Nathanson, from Minnesota. He hung on to me as if I was the dearest friend he had ever had, professionally. Nobody could have done more or better than he did.

By this time the newspapers had gotten on to my name and history. Harvey Klemmer, of the Detroit News, was the only one of the reporters who was allowed in to see me. He tipped off the other boys, and treated me with the greatest consideration. When I was able to move, the police had the bracelets on me, and I was chained to the bed. My wrists were so small, by that time, that they had to pull the nippers into the last link. The doctors protested, but the dicks insisted and won.

Some of the cops were humane. My friends would slip me cigars to give to the attendants. Once I was caught passing some of them to a window cleaner. They made a terrible fuss, saying I was scheming to escape.

During my stay in the prison hospital, I witnessed a near death-bed scene. I still was chained to the bed. One night they brought in a beautiful English girl, shot through the lungs by a gangster. She was hardly undressed, when two bulls from the homicide squad arrived to grill her. One on each side, kept asking her who shot her. She was in mortal agony, a young interne wiping and wiping the blood and

froth from her lips. One of the house-doctors kept telling her to confess so that they could treat her.

Along came the District Attorney. Then they brought in a string of gunmen, gangsters, and underworld boys of all rackets. She would shake her head that she did not know them when they filed past her bed. I was two cots from her, and held up my chained-hand, so that she could see it. She gave me a sweet, wan smile of sympathy. When the bulls were not looking, I would put my fingers to my lips, and shake my head. She nodded understandingly, but, Oh, ever so faintly!

They kept at her all through the night. I often wondered how the kid lived; but she did live, and was still alive, the last time I heard from her.

I have gone through aplenty in my life, but that scene was the most impressive I ever had any experience with. There was the death-light burning, the nurse at the foot of the bed, and the kind young interne at the head, giving the stricken child medicine and soothing her, tears of sympathy in his eyes. Another young girl was in a nearby bed, sobbing quietly. Two hard-boiled dicks were torturing their victim, trying to fasten the guilt on somebody, whether or no. I, the hardened sinner, was the spectator, chained so that I could not escape, helpless, choking with fury.

After a long, long time the poor baby slept, and I had a chat with the interne. He said the nagging and excitement were liable to kill the patient, but that youth and vitality were on her side. That kid certainly stood the test, that night in Detroit. Her friends visited me also. They were from New York, where she used to live, and were swell gunmen.

Finally, I was discharged from the hospital, and the police took me back to the county jail. I was put into a private

room, and had every attention. There I stayed until my case, for violation of probation, was called.

I forgot to say that I was visited by August Vollmer, the Chief of Police, of Berkeley, Calif., while I was in the hospital. I speak of him elsewhere as the good-hearted bull, who was practical enough to say something more than merely, "Go straight. It doesn't pay. You can't win," etc. He showed me one way to make an honest living. He put the bug into my head to at least try to write for a living.

Accompanying him was Elmer Harris, the moving picture director for Cecil de Mille. They came several times with beautiful flowers. It was the kindness and courtesy of these people, and others, which caused me to make another try to get on the band wagon, with most of the people in society.

When my case came up, the letter of the law demanded that I be punished. There was no doubt I had violated my probation. I knew, in addition, what the authorities did not know, that I had violated it on numerous occasions. Morally, I deserved the rap on all counts. I could not have had a kick coming, if I had been given what I deserved.

But Judge Cotter was a practical man and listened to reasons not found in law books. Inspector Lally spoke to him, urging the desirability of giving me a chance, now that I was down and out. He was backed up by Mrs. Clara Leitzring, who had charge of my case, and Mrs. Rexford, the social worker.

The fact that women were fighting on my side, gave me a new thrill. Theretofore, it had been the dames who, nine times out of ten, had treated me unfairly and tried to push my head under water. Now it was the people whom the newspaper boys call the sob-sisters who were willing to forgive.

The question of creed, even, made no difference, as in the case of the ladies of the Woodward Avenue Baptist Church. It did not seem to matter to them, when they came to see me every day, and brought flowers, that I had been a liar, a thief, a badger, a blackmailer and a con-woman. It, likewise, did not seem to matter to them when I told them it was incomprehensible to me how criminals could get religion at the end of their careers.

When I kicked free, I went to board with a respectable family. The bill was paid by Walter Latimer, a reformer, who has no more money than the law allows, but who feels called upon, by the Lord, to help criminals go straight. He stakes them until they get on their feet. He certainly ought to get his reward on earth, as well as in Heaven, because he does his stuff so quietly and unostentatiously.

As soon as I could catch my breath, I started writing to newspapers, magazines, book publishers and writers' managers, to see if I could break in on the author-game. After considerable disappointment, I was encouraged by the receipt of a letter from Morrill Goddard, Manager of the New York American Weekly, enclosing money for transportation, to come for an interview with him. He also inquired if I knew his old friend, Sophie Lyons.

So I went East once more, this time to do a different kind of work from what I had been in the habit of doing. The result was five illustrated Sunday-stories, in the Weekly, during the latter part of the Summer of 1927. The pay for this work was so satisfactory that I started to make arrangements to write this book, which deals with my whole life instead of a few incidents.

In the writing of the newspaper stories, and in the course of my negotiations for publishing the book, I have been un-

der deep obligation to Travis Hoke, an all round, star newspaper man, on the American staff.

After I had finished my work in New York, and had some money for more than the bare necessities of life, I decided to try a couple of health resorts, hoping to recover completely from my operations. I forgot to say that the first operation in Detroit was not a complete success. The second time I was cut open, the doctor did a better job, apparently. This was not because he did not do all that was humanly possible the first time. When he tackled me in the second round, I was in better condition to stand punishment.

As I was saying, I went in quest of health. First I tried Ocean City for a few weeks. That did some good. Then I went to the Pocono Mountains. That did more good. Then I went to Philadelphia, where I got down to work on this autobiography.

It may interest the reading public, and others, to know some of the difficulty of trying to be a reformed crook, and the kindness of some bulls who have official duties to perform. When I got fairly started writing this life history, the dicks in Philly spotted me going to my apartment. The next thing I knew I was taken up to City Hall, for examination, and told to get out of town in twenty-four hours.

I was completely upset, until a legit friend, and lawyer, went personally to Captain of Detectives Charles Beckman. When it was explained to him what I was doing, he said he would be the last one in the world to push anybody down who was trying to get up. I was given as much time as I wanted to finish the work; I was helped officially; and I was not bothered subsequently.

CHAPTER XXXV

AU REVOIR, BUT NOT GOOD-BY

This business of being an author has its humorous, and interesting, as well as its serious, side. It would astonish most people to see my mail. My old friends, in the police, write me letters of encouragement. Christians feel called upon to send me platitudes. Reformers insist upon drawing their pet theories to my attention. Professional crooks berate and praise me. Beggars importune me. Sycophants lather me with adulation. The rich—and others—patronize me.

If ever I become rich, or near-rich, I am going to help criminals in my own way. Getting one of them a good job is all right in the case of the individual, but improving conditions so that all of them who want to work for a living wage can get jobs, is better. An old-age pension is all right for those brave souls who work all their lives and resist the temptation to crime, provided it does not tend to reduce wages while they are working. Institutions like the Y. M. C. A., no matter how laudable their objects, enable the few to work for less wages than their fellows, because the charity gives them better home-conditions than the ones who marry and raise families.

Benefits must be general, not special. Some way must be devised to give everybody a job at a decent wage who is able and willing to work. Public ownership of public utilities

would be a starter. The abolition of the profit system, taking industries, one at a time, in the order in which they are important to the life of the community would be the next series of steps. Private operation at fair wages is not antagonistic to this principle. If this is Socialism, make the worst of it. I am an individualist. But I can't see why grain elevators shouldn't be socialized just as much as coal mines.

In general, there is no such thing as a diseased mind among criminals, as such. The average crook is out to make a living, just like the honest man. There are stupid men in business. There are degenerate men and women who are very talented. Also there are clever writers and actors who are dope-fiends. In the same way, one meets people like that in the underworld.

It is the bunk to try to treat criminals as if they were sick. Just as in medicine, the real remedy is to remove the cause of the disease. The criminal must be treated before, and not after, he becomes a criminal. Give the young people a living wage, so that they can live and dress and amuse themselves like human beings, and there will be very few criminals.

There is another way of looking at the criminal class. Once a man or woman gets the taste of the chase, and brings down the game, he or she continues, like the sportsman. There is danger and glory in hunting the tiger. On the other hand, very few people hunt tigers for sport. I myself never stole for the fun of stealing. I wasn't built that way. I wanted money or revenge, more money than I could make honestly or more chance to punish the animal that injured me and my fellows.

Violence breeds violence. Every time a new punishment, or deterrent, is devised, a new counter is developed to offset it. Depth-bombs came after submarines. The torch was

used against Harveyized steel safes. Bootlegging improved in method with the introduction of poisoned liquor, to make people sober. There never was a time in the history of the world when men were as venturesome, as daring and brave as they are to-day. Men fly airplanes and dig bridge-foundations in caissons. Do you think that mere punishment is going to make people good?

Let me attempt to tell you just a little more about myself and then I will have done:

I have not played cards for twenty years, though I used to play poker for stakes and act as banker, in friendly games. I have gambled at the roulette-wheel in Monte Carlo and Rio de Janeiro, and at the races at Ascot, Brighton, and other places. No, I never played solitaire, what the English call patience, because I have no patience, not being built for a recluse.

I never saw the execution of a criminal; and, what is more, I wouldn't see one. Such things encourage murders. I have, however, seen the results of suicide, poison in the world, and hanging in jail. It has been my sad duty to look up friends in the morgue.

Gun-play is not one of my usual experiences, though I know something about it. I have heard shots fired in anger. Personally, I prefer a revolver to an automatic, because the former is not so complicated as the latter, and is less likely to get out of order at the critical point. A .32 is not too large to be used by ladies. I have blackjacked and been blackjacked.

Dope I abhor, because I dislike its smell and its taste. I have tried it out of curiosity and to study its effect. The evil results of heroin, especially, frighten me. You can't be cured, once the habit gets you, unless you want to be cured,

and will it, in spite of all the suffering involved in stopping. The only way I know how to stop, is to stop. I am not so sure the doctors' way of tapering-off is the best way. It isn't the best way coming off a drunk, though you may suffer more by a sudden stop than by slowing down gradually.

Speaking of liquor, I have drunk almost every kind known to man, from beer and ale, to brandy or whiskey-and-soda, and champagne. I am especially fond of Amer Picon, the North African grape, tonic-liquor, the way the boulevardier drinks it in Paris—a shot in a tall tumbler of iced Grenadine. Once I got drunk on absinthe, but it gave me a frightful headache. For that matter, though I prefer not to get drunk at all, and do not if I can help it, I would rather get drunk on whiskey than on champagne. The latter is so lasting in its final kick, especially when you have been drinking the kind the French drink—the still wine.

No, I am never tempted to steal just because I see an easy chance to do so. I used to steal because I wanted money and could not get work which would pay me enough to live on. I never stole for the mere pleasure of stealing. I am not a kleptomaniac. There is no particular feeling of virtue on my part, when I am not stealing. The benefit to me in money, safety, comfort, and lack of worry is what I calculate, and what appeals to me, as against the nerve-racking gamble of being caught.

I enjoy swimming, horsebacking, and rowing. When I get an opportunity, I indulge in all these. The exercise of dancing is very fascinating to me. I drive a motor car, but I have no need for one, now, in my business, and I can't afford one, at the present time, merely for pleasure.

I learned to play the piano, as a child, in Dublin, and in London. I picked up dancing, naturally, in dance-halls and

on roof-gardens. I speak English, French, and Portuguese —and smoke cigarettes.

As to the use of money by crooks to escape from legal punishment, I could say a mouthful. The bribe-giver and the bribe-taker are equally guilty, so it is hard to secure evidence. Each side, to the bribery transaction, is equally interested in keeping a closed mouth. Then, too, it is considered dishonorable to split on the other fellow. Usually the exposure comes when the giver finds the go-between has lied about the transaction—either copping off all of the money, or a large portion of it. Lawyers are often hypocrites and liars at this game.

In general, money counts for more in America than in England. The judges, in the latter country, are paid too much in the way of salaries to be reached, and they have a social standing they are afraid to jeopardize. In the same country, the attendant officials are paid so little that they are slaves to their sanctimonious masters.

Nationality, religion, social standing and political faith have considerable to do with the treatment of those accused of crime. Some judges are 101 per cent. American, their families having been in the United States for a couple of generations. From the bench, even, they prove themselves, by showing their prejudice against, say, a poor Russian Jew, who speaks in broken English.

As there are many Catholic judges and court and prison officials, it helps to be a Catholic. I don't mean to say they do not, generally, carry out the law and observe the rules; but they are bound to have their judgments influenced. This applies equally to Protestants. A Methodist judge is more likely to think a liquor-violation is "treason" than any other sort of a judge would. Strikers and Socialists are up against

a lot of prejudices when they get into court. I suppose this is because the representatives of the established order are afraid for their jobs.

No, I am not sorry for what I have done. I broke the law, was caught, and paid the price. My crimes were against the rules laid down by society. You lose, unless you are lucky, if you do not follow the regulations.

In France, the court may decree you a *relegué*—forbid you to enter a certain city or district. I have never had such a sentence imposed upon me. In the United States, the police may order you to leave a certain city. They have no authority to do so, but they can make it so unpleasant for a criminal that he has to obey, unless he can afford to resist. I am a renegé, or deportee, having had that distinction conferred upon me twice. Bracelets were only put on me once in my career—in Detroit, when I was in the hospital.

I never invested my savings. Occasionally, I received interest on bank deposits, but that was purely accidental, so far as I was concerned. I recall though that, once, I did buy some lots to encourage a crook who was trying to make an honest living. As I made no further payments on them, after the first, I suppose that could hardly be called an investment. The only Liberty Bonds I ever owned were the ones I stole, and I did not keep them long enough to clip the coupons.

At various times I have associated with crooks who came from good families. For some reason or other, I always felt sorry for them. It seemed too bad to me that they did not have an opportunity to go straight, no matter what the cause. There was the Phony Kid, for instance, who was the son of a Pittsburgh doctor. There was another boy whose father was a rich broker. Then there was the case of the girl who

was driven from home because she had a baby before she went through a man-made marriage ceremony. God Almighty may surprise her parents some day when He pronounces judgment.

For a woman of fifty-two come next birthday, I am well preserved. My hair is still light-red, and there is plenty of it. In stature I am five feet six inches. My weight is 165 pounds. It is not necessary for me to use glasses except to read the telephone book. I do, however, use them, when I have a lot of reading or writing to do.

Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to sit at home, at night, talking to a few intelligent friends. When I wander from my own fireside, I prefer a light opera to the cinema—but I must have somebody with me for company. You see I am gregarious, if the herd is small. Otherwise, I am fond, still, of night-life, but principally as an onlooker.

And so I come to the end of my autobiography. It is not all here. Many details are lacking. But it ought to give a fair idea of my life. It is true. Possibly there are some errors as to dates and names, but I have tried in good faith to show my true self, without glossing over my weaknesses or faults. You may hear from me again, and in a more constructively interesting manner.